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Contents

The Week 148

Editorials

Hoover Uses the Whip 151
Incompetent Banking Leadership 152

General Articles

Two American Boys in the U. S. S. R. ..... David and Robin Kinkead 154
Fight the Good Fight ..... T. S. Matthews 157
Foster and Fish ..... Edmund Wilson 158
Virginians on Strike ..... Louis Adamic 163
Washington Notes ..... T. R. B. 164
Revue and Revolution ..... Stark Young 165
A Communication ..... Murray Godwin 167

Correspondence 168

Reviews of Books

The Great Man ..... Robert Morss Lovett 169
Myths of the World ..... Frederick Dupee 170
Lawrence's Last Novel ..... Robert Cantwell 171
Storm Over Africa ..... R. F. Alfred Hoernlé 171
Book Notes 172

The Week

WINSTON CHURCHILL has now done his best to wreck the Round Table Conference, and has probably helped it. His statement of the extreme Diehard position was so wild, so full of obvious errors of fact that it could not fail to have an adverse reaction. The conferees themselves have quietly ignored it and gone ahead with their work. One great achievement has thus far been scored, in that the Native States are standing with British India for substantial freedom. It has, however, proved very difficult to reconcile the differences between Mohammedan and Hindu—harder than at first seemed likely. The Mohammedans, not unnaturally, want special protection for minorities, at least in those parts of the country where their representatives are few. An acid test of their sincerity may be obtained by asking them whether they are prepared to offer a similar special status and "communal representation" to the Untouchables among the Hindus, who in many cases outnumber the Moslems. The Conference has still, in our opinion, no more than a bare chance of succeeding; and if it does succeed, there is again only a bare chance of getting its results peacefully accepted in India. It is because they know that the alternative is chaos and suffering on the greatest scale that both Indian and British delegates are straining every nerve to find a solution.

IT IS hard to believe that revolution in Spain is not merely another dust cloud to hide the mistakes of the long-jawed Alfonso. Though for two decades real revolution has been just around the corner, the Bourbon King has ruled under such a lucky star that, in spite of ignoring completely the welfare of his people, he has survived assassins' bombs, plots, uprisings, colonial disasters and a shattered exchequer. Since 1923 he has been frantically endeavoring to cover up his almost criminal responsibility in the Moroccan fiasco, which in this period has cost close to 30,000 lives through graft, inefficiency and Alfonso's swollen dream that he was a great commander who could direct the Spanish armies from Madrid, without seriously interfering with his hunting trips and his languorous summers in fashionable San Sebastián. This politics of concealment, devoid of any constructive program for a nation sinking ever more deeply into the mire of misery, brought in the flamboyant Andalusian tippler, Primo de Rivera, on a fake *coup d' état*, resulted in the abortive revolts of Perpignan and of Ciudad Real and Valencia, and finally installed the most discredited figure in Spanish public life as prime minister—General Damaso Berenguer. Spanish politics, even in the time of O'Donnel, never sank to such low ignominy and cynicism. Berenguer was, next to the King himself, most responsible for the insane disasters of Morocco, was convicted, pardoned, raised in rank, put in charge of the Palace Guards, and finally given all Spain as a stage for his funereal talents.

JUMPING-JACK politics may have ended in Spain, but unless the parasitical army caste is cleaned out, no improvements will have been achieved. If the monarchy should fall and control be assumed by a military clique which would call to its aid such corrupt parliamentary office seekers as Sánchez Guerra, Maura or Romanones, who battened on Spain's ills even before Primo de Rivera, Spain will merely enter a cycle of super-state militarism already such a dreary spectacle in Latin America. Only through drastic measures can Spain set her house in order:

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a determined separation of Church and State; the break-up of *mortmain* property, of the vast absentee estates, and the royal hunting preserves; the improvement of public education, which is now, even in Madrid, as bad as Negro education in Alabama; the rehabilitation of justice (corrupted by Primo de Rivera, as in the famous trial of Caoba, a mistress charged with trafficking in drugs, and by the King, as in the release of the absconders of the Unión Minera Bank of Bilboa); the formulation of a new constitution based on a federation of the various restive cultural regions and the proper degree of local autonomy. But things have drifted to such a sorry pass in Spain, and popular social and political forces are so bitterly divided, that it is difficult to see where strong leadership can be found, imbued with sufficient intelligence and idealism to carry out the program which alone will save the country from worse evils. And should Moroccan revolt spring to life full armed at this juncture, Spain might have to give over her treaty mandate. The vexing North African question would be reopened with serious repercussions in all of Europe.

SINCLAIR LEWIS has the engaging habit of saying what he thinks, whether before a men's Bible class in Kansas City or before the Swedish Academy. Mr. Lewis is also a red-hot patriot and conservative at heart: this is the explanation of why, in his speech accepting the Nobel Prize, he so bitterly attacked the American Academy. He doesn't really want to abolish that dusty institution, or hang its members by their long white beards, or set up a soviet composed of the writers who contribute to The American Mercury: all he really wants is to reform the Academy by having it include the novelists, poets and critics he admires—among others Mencken, Nathan, Hergesheimer, Bromfield, Sandburg, Masters, Fannie Hurst, James Branch Cabell and Vachel Lindsay. He wants the Academy to be an institution to which the American artist "can turn for inspiration, whose criticism he can accept or whose praise may be precious to him."

MR. Lewis is a swell guy and all that; his emotions are as generous as his hair is red, but as a critic of the American Academy, he's not so hot; he isn't even warm. An academy has several functions, but offering precious praise or criticism to younger writers is one of the least important. Young writers are praised enough already, and if they are the sort who accept criticism from any academy, they aren't the sort worth criticizing. Fundamentally an academy should be a group of older writers existing as an organization against which the younger writers can intelligently and fruitfully rebel. The American Academy is too meaningless to perform this function, but the reason for this is not the one that Mr. Lewis assigns. In the past, the Academy has not been unfriendly to new talents: on the contrary, it has been entirely too receptive. It has elected many of its members before they had really proved their character as men and authors—before they had proved anything, in fact, except their ability to produce two or three books which were enthusiastically praised by the newspapers. By being less eager to please the public, the Academy would have made fewer mistakes. The mortality of talent is high in America; the mortality among academicians is very low indeed. Many of them would be dead on their feet, if they ever stood on their feet; but the same can be said for many of the younger writers with whom Mr. Lewis would like to replace them. The remedy for the present situation of the Academy is not to be even more receptive than in the past: it lies in the opposite course of being more dilatory, dignified and snobbish.

MR. Thomas R. Chadbourne's heroic attempt to mobilize sugar interests all over the world in support of a program of restricted production through an international cartel which would assign output quotas and maintain prices has come to grief because the German interests would not join. Overproduction of sugar was serious before the depression, and the situation of the industry was made doubly critical by the Smoot-Hawley tariff, which will eventually deprive the Cuban growers of most of their largest market. The argument of the Germans appears to rest on the interest of the nation rather than that of their own industry: they decline to accept the largest quota the other groups could be persuaded to allot them, on the ground that Germany must have an excess of exports if she is to pay her debts. This is true enough, but their real motive seems more likely to have been the chance to make a profit by large production at the higher prices which restriction of output elsewhere would bring about; they probably counted on the necessity of the rest to restrict even if they do not join. If so, the negotiations have reached the stage of bluff; the other conferees have separated with an apparently final decision to give up the whole plan. Whether this will bring the Germans to time remains to be seen. In any case, cartels are almost always weak because of just this situation; one competitor is always tempted to make profit at the expense of others. Some more organic form of control is necessary, both for the health of industry and for the protection of the consumer.

SINCE Louis Adamic's article about the Danville strike, published in this issue of The New Republic, was written, the conflict has become more acute. Strikers have been evicted from their houses into the winter cold. The presence of the state militia has not bred good feeling. A gasoline station supposed to belong to a strikebreaker, and the house of a magistrate, have been bombed. It is well to remember that such acts of violence in a strike are often committed by *agents provocateurs* to furnish an excuse for repression. There is as yet no sign of the exercise of mob violence against the strikers or their leaders which blackened the Gastonia struggle,

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but in every other respect this stand for mere union recognition under conservative A. F. of L. leadership is opposed as bitterly as the strikes of other Southern cotton workers led by Communists. Incidentally, it is appropriate to remember that the wage reduction which precipitated the strike was announced after representative industrial leaders last winter had promised the President that during the depression an industrial truce would be observed, that there would be no wage cuts and no open conflict with labor. If this truce had meaning, why don't representative employers or spokesmen of the administration call the mill owner to account?

MR. DOAK, the new Secretary of Labor, starts his public career almost as badly as he could, by making a great hullabaloo about his intention of deporting gangsters. Many of the criminals who are creating such a serious situation in our big cities are native born, so that even if Mr. Doak makes good on his threat, the amelioration will be much less than he is trying to suggest. Also, he will either have to act inside the law, or outside it: if he proposes extra-legal steps, he will not get far, and should not; and if he acts within the law, he will only do that which the Department should have been doing all the time. What would we think of a chief of police who announced that on and after January first he proposed to maintain order? In any case, there is no more sense in dumping our gangsters in another country than in another state: until we improve the conditions which now make gangdom possible, we shall never solve the problem.

FINALLY, The New Republic does not believe, on the Department of Labor's record, that it can be trusted to discriminate between gangsters and other people whom it would like to deport because it objects to their political views. We offer in evidence the case of Guido Serio, an Italian whom the Department is at present insisting must be deported, although his only crime is being a Communist. The Department maintains, moreover, that he must be sent back to Italy and nowhere else, despite the fact that in numerous previous cases a deportee has been allowed to depart voluntarily for any country he chooses, and it is certain that Mussolini will put Serio to death as soon as he falls into the hands of the Italian officials. If Mr. Doak would interest himself in preventing this murder of a man charged only with Communism, it would be a more impressive demonstration of his importance than his statement about gangsters, which has every earmark of cheap politics cheaply played.

IN The New Republic of October 29, 1930, we discussed the anomalous position of collegiate schools of journalism, which give professional training for an occupation which, as practised by the overwhelming number of those engaged in it, meets none of the standard tests for a profession. We find an unexpected confirmation for our views in a report made by a special committee of the New York State Society of Newspaper Editors, the substance of which was recently made public, though the Society as a whole has not yet acted on it. The committee found that "the newspaper is not offering sufficient financial rewards to warrant a young man spending the time and money for a four-year course of preparation." It advocated that journalism courses be confined to two years, of which only one should be devoted to actual technical training, the other being spent in study of the ordinary liberal-arts subjects. The New Republic suggested the usual four-year course, with only a part of the last semester of the last year spent in technical training. The committee suggested also that there is a heavy overproduction of journalism-school graduates, who are being turned out at the rate of about 1,000 a year when there are only about 12,000 available positions on newspapers—including, of course, those held by men who have never taken any course in journalism. It is clear that Abraham Flexner, who criticized the schools of journalism so sharply in his new book, "Universities—American, English, German," might well have done so on even more serious grounds than he advanced.

IT IS a safe guess that a majority of the experts who are members of the American Economic Association, the American Statistical Association, the American Sociological Society and the American Association for Labor Legislation are opposed to the use of the "yellow-dog contract" in employer-employee relations. This contract binds the employee not to be a member of the union of his trade, as a condition of employment, and is a stock weapon in the arsenal of managements which wish to smash unions or to prevent the growth of true collective bargaining. It has received much publicity lately, for instance in the incident of the appointment of Judge Parker to the Supreme Court. These associations are about to hold their annual meetings in Cleveland, and presumably have arranged to patronize the leading hotels of the city Yet six of these hotels—the Cleveland, Hollenden, Winton, Olmsted, Allerton and Statler—have locked out their organized employees, who had enjoyed seventeen years of collective relations, for refusing to sign such contracts. They have refused all offers to mediate, conciliate or arbitrate with the unions, although the unions have consented to any amicable means of settlement. As a result the hotels have been branded as unfair by the Cleveland and Ohio Federation of Labor. Here is an opportunity for action to supplement theory. Will the social-science experts do anything to effectuate disapproval?

NO ONE knows how many persons have scrapped their radio sets because of the incessant advertising which is heard on the air (in America almost alone in the world), but their number must be very large. A publishers' association in New York City recently conducted an investigation and found there were

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several stations in the metropolitan area which appeared to have almost no listeners whatever. These were studios operated solely for revenue, and broadcasting practically nothing but "plugs" for various commercial goods and services. Now the advertisers, having succeeded in ruining the radio for so many people, have turned their attention to the movies. For several years, the cinema magnates have been trying to get up courage to force business propaganda on their audiences, and in the present hard times they have at last made the plunge. Short films are beginning to be shown "through the courtesy of" advertisers—a completely false phrase which means that the theater has sold part of the time of its audience to some business house which hopes sooner or later to get its money back. The broadcasters justify advertising on the air by saying that expensive programs are thus provided which would not otherwise be possible. The statement is not true, but it has a surface plausibility. The movie theaters, however, have no possible excuse: their patrons pay, and pay amply, to be entertained. We wish those who frequent the cinema had spirit enough to protest to the manager whenever their confidence is thus abused, and to boycott those theaters which persist; but we have no illusions as to the likelihood of any such thing.

Hoover Uses the Whip

DURING the first two years of his administration President Hoover was severely criticized for lack of leadership. He let Congress drift into a bad tariff bill, which he declined to veto; he rarely used strong language or ventured publicly to oppose anything or anybody. This weakened the confidence which the country likes to feel in a President, and was in large part the cause, so it was said, of his rapidly diminishing popular support. Evidently these criticisms have been effective. The President has decided to take a strong line. He berates Congress with scarcely concealed indignation for "playing politics with human misery" when it wants to appropriate more money than he thinks is proper for relief of drought-stricken farmers and unemployed workers. He adds up all the appropriation bills which have been introduced—many of them bills for identical projects, not all of which would conceivably be passed—and frightens the country with a total of billions which their passage would draw out of the Treasury.

A President who acts in this way always gains a temporary advantage, regardless of the intrinsic merit of his policy. In the first place, he attracts attention by playing the drama of conflict. People who watch it are bound to take sides. And, unless they are personally hard hit by the stand he takes, they are likely to side with the single executive who knows what he wants and clearly demands it, as against the hydra-headed legislature which wants so many things and is so much divided within itself. Then, too, there is always the pressure for prompt action, which naturally favors the President as against Congress. If it will only do as he bids, without debate or recrimination, something—no matter what—can be effected. It is always possible that individual Senators or Representatives could propose a better line of action, or that Congress as a whole could eventually arrive at a wiser decision. But it takes time for Congress to make up its own mind, and more time to enact legislation which the President opposes. The present moment is one in which Mr. Hoover is in a good position to press this advantage. Unemployment is here; no matter what Congress wants to do about it, it can do nothing so quickly as to rubber-stamp the administration's measures. It is no wonder that journalistic and popular opinion has in some measure rallied to support the President at this juncture.

Leadership, however, may be vigorous without being good, and the judgment of the long run may differ from the judgment of the moment. In this case Mr. Hoover's plea, while it masquerades under the need of prompt action, is essentially negative, and is the product of former weakness. His difficulties with Congress are, at bottom, of his own making. What he wants is really to prevent Congress from doing more to relieve the depression than passing the modest measures he favors, to keep it from considering any long-time program against depression in the future, to forbid it from meeting in extra session or legislating progressively on anything. If he is right that not more than a hundred million or so can be added to routine building appropriations—a very small percentage of the usual expenditure—it is because he is unprepared with plans, drawings, land and other necessary preliminaries which authorities on the subject have for many years declared must be attended to far in advance of the need, if construction is to be used to mitigate depression. If it is true that more cannot be spent without incurring a deficit and necessitating an increase in taxes, that is because he and his predecessor have repeatedly reduced income taxes, on the theory that lower rates for the rich would enhance prosperity and increase the yield, that there was no danger of a deficit and no need of building up a surplus against possible emergencies. If the Senate does not take on trust Senator Watson's assumption that "Herbert Hoover would be as familiar with the question of unemployment and of taking care of the unemployed as any man anywhere," it is justified by the fact that Mr. Hoover and his subordinates have consistently underestimated the number of the unemployed and the danger of increase in that number, that they have opposed all suggested plans for a permanent method of dealing with unemployment, and have lagged even in the application of emergency relief.

It may be unnecessary to appropriate $30,000,000 for food loans to farmers ruined by drought, in addition to the recommended $30,000,000 for

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loans to buy feed, seed and fertilizer, but the opposition to the appropriation on the ground that it is a dole is well answered by the ironical statement that it seems to be wise to feed starving cattle but wicked to feed starving men, women and children.

Senator La Follette is fully justified in declaring: "The policy of this administration since the stock-market crash in 1929 has been to minimize the economic results of the depression, to play down the number of the unemployed, and I say that I, for one, believe the time has come to stop trying to talk the people of the United States out of this situation. The time has come for Congress to ascertain the facts and to act accordingly." In these circumstances, it is no wonder that the President is not sustained on important points even by supposedly well disciplined Republican members of the House of Representatives.

The strength of the President's leadership at this moment seems to us like the strength of an automobile driver, who, after carelessly coasting down a hill around a curve on an icy pavement toward a railroad crossing, suddenly has to jam on the brakes. It may be necessary to jam on the brakes, under the circumstances. But our chief impulse is not to admire his foot-power. And it is still uncertain whether he will not skid across the track or turn over into a ditch.

In a situation like this the country suffers from having a President who cannot stir himself to leadership except to block action. But it also suffers from lack of an opposition which has power, cohesion, a program and a leader of its own. There are a number of able and wise men in Congress who are deeply concerned with public welfare and have done thorough work in several departments of thinking. We have Senators like Norris, Couzens, Wagner, Walsh, La Follette and Borah. We have excellent proposals, like those for public operation of Muscle Shoals, federal regulation of interstate power and holding companies, federal employment exchanges and advance planning of public works, regulation of the labor injunction, recognition of Russia. But these men are all free-lances, and these measures are not parts of a coherent national policy, which is carefully devised to meet every important need of the country's life. Outside of the little group of progressively inclined Senators from both parties, there is no semblance of organized activity in behalf of any group of measures not proposed by the administration, and there is no party organization throughout the country ready to support these men and these measures. There is in Congress no single spokesman for an opposition, who has the ability and the public standing to carry on a controversy with the President as a debate between two opposing schools of thought and groups of interests rather than as a senseless and jealous conflict between two correlative branches of the government.

If we had had such an organization and such a leader, the defects of the Republican administrations of the past decade would have been made far more clear. The country might have had continuously before it an alternative line of action with which it could compare the policy pursued. Such an absurd performance as the coöperation promise of the seven Democratic leaders, after an election which had greatly increased the strength of their party, because the voters were becoming restive under the government they had had, would have been avoided. At the present juncture, the administration would not have been able to profit so much by an appearance of whipping the unruly and undisciplined into line to face a national emergency. The absence of a thoroughgoing progressive opposition to the thoroughgoing conservative rulership under which we have lived for so long confuses and stultifies our politics. Our governmental machine creaks and groans with a conflict between negatives—the negative of a President who wants the government to go as slowly and do as little as possible, and the void where a concerted opposition should be—a void filled only with the confusion and discontent of those who do not like the President's leadership but are unable to improvise any other. It is a question how long a government which behaves in this way can survive in an advanced industrial civilization.

Incompetent Banking Leadership

THE CLOSING of the Bank of United States in New York City on December 11 last involves considerations that go far beyond the management of the internal affairs of a single banking institution. This is not one of the simple country banks, failures of which we have come to regard with equanimity, but it is described by The New York Times as "the largest bank in the United States ever to suspend payments" and "possibly the largest in the world that has ever closed its doors." It is an institution with sixty offices in the various boroughs of New York. According to the last published statement of the condition of the bank, it had, on September 24, 1930, total resources of $254,000,000; deposits of $203,000,000; capital and surplus of more than $42,000,000; and some 400,000 depositors. It is estimated that the bank held, on the day of closing, about $80,000,000 in thrift or savings deposits, probably in large part the small accumulated savings of thousands of wage earners and salaried employees.

While the shut-down came with a shock of surprise to the general public as well as to many of the depositors in the institution, it was in reality foreshadowed months before. As The New York Times states, in its account of the matter, "the events leading up to the closing of the institution have occupied the attention of the financial district for the past two months. As early as November, 1929, there were reports in Wall Street that all was

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not well with the bank, but these reports died down and did not revive actively until last October." In October the report was general that a merger between the Bank of United States and three large banks was in process of negotiation and on November 24 this report was confirmed by the announcement of a plan of merger and of a list of the distinguished new members of the board of directors and officers of another billion-dollar bank. Shortly thereafter, however, the interested institutions, in a formal statement to the press, confessed their inability to agree on the terms of a satisfactory merger. On December 11, after a conference lasting until four in the morning between representatives of the New York Federal Reserve Bank, the largest banking institutions of the city, the Lieutenant-Governor of the state and others, the Superintendent of Banking closed the doors of the Bank of United States and took over its affairs.

In a financial market so tense and nervous as our American market now is, the collapse of a large institution is bound to have widespread repercussions. Many earlier efforts to produce stability and a more sanguine state of mind may be completely undone by one large-scale débâcle. This was precisely the effect, first, of the rumors regarding the Bank of United States and, second, of the action taken by the authorities. The suspension of one bank was followed almost immediately not only by the congregation of crowds around the doors of the closed institution but also by large and prolonged "runs" on the several banks associated in the public mind with the proposed merger. Although the facts on this phase of the matter are not available, it is certain that withdrawals of deposits from many institutions grew during the week to abnormal proportions and forced the throwing, by the banks so affected, of a substantial volume of bonds on a market already unable to sustain easily even a small volume of business.

This episode, considered solely as an isolated incident, inevitably raises the question of the responsibility of our financial leaders for the effective control of this situation and others like it. It would seem obvious to the lay mind that the first duty of responsible leadership in times like the present consists in using every available means to preserve such stability as exists, without violating any sound principles of finance and economics. Yet, among the reasons given for the failure to arrive at a friendly settlement that might have avoided the events of the past week, is the statement that "the nature of the business conducted by the Bank of United States differed greatly from that of the large Wall Street banks, and none of the latter institutions was capable of handling it, it was felt." Aside from this confession of incompetence only a casual reading of the published accounts of the course of the negotiations affecting the Bank of United States reveals plainly how close the matter came to a constructive settlement and how the exercise of greater ingenuity and courage and the willingness to use the power of authority could conceivably have averted most of what finally happened.

At a time when many serious students of a sick business situation find in the control of currency and credit one of the solutions of our present difficulties, the question may well be asked where we may reasonably look in this country for the formulation of a sound credit policy and for its effective execution. For the attitude of mind and the quality of administration that is exposed in this case of a single bank failure are the same that were entrusted with direction of affairs that culminated in the crises of October and November, 1929. Whatever our final hypothesis concerning the ultimate cause of the business depression of 1930 may be, it is clear enough that many of its roots can be traced to the unrestrained orgy of stock speculation in the few years before. If business expanded its capacity and equipment to unconscionable limits, it was, in the last analysis, because it was so easy to increase, almost without effort, the supply of available capital. Yet throughout the whole episode, of long enough duration to permit careful inspection and investigation into its character, the supreme banking authority of the country hesitated, issued harmless warnings and failed to the end to adopt effective measures of control.

The universal interdependence of our financial structure, and its high degree of sensitiveness to adverse influences, make it more imperative than ever before that it be regulated in accordance with the terms of a premeditated program and policy and through administrative organs of the highest quality. The reckless conduct, so vividly and accurately described in these columns, in the management of investment trusts and in the flotation of foreign bond issues, could not have flourished in the light of really effective machinery of control. In a deeper sense, the wild speculative movements of the past years and isolated incidents like that of the Bank of United States, bound to engender hysteria in a situation requiring utmost calm, can be laid at the door of our contemporary banking leadership, which seems still fearful to adopt courageous policy in the public interest.

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EDITORS

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK
ALVIN JOHNSON E. C. LINDEMAN LEWIS MUMFORD
GILBERT SELDES R. G. TUGWELL LEO WOLMAN

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Two American Boys in the U. S. S. R.

Robin and David Kinkead, the authors of the series of letters of which we print the first instalment below, are two young Americans in their early twenties who worked their way over to Russia and have been earning their living in Moscow. We are informed that while they went to Russia in a spirit of sympathetic interest for the great social and economic experiment of the Soviets, they were not Communists and undertook their journey primarily in a spirit of youthful adventure. The letters, addressed to members of their family, were written without thought of publication and are here presented because The New Republic believes, with Albert Rhys Williams, that their story "gives a most accurate, vivid and illuminating picture of present life in Moscow." The two brothers arrived in Moscow a few days before Christmas last year. —THE EDITORS.

THE TRAIN stopped at the last Polish station and some soldiers came through and examined our passports, while others with bayonets walked up and down on each side of the train. Soon after the train started up it stopped again and some Russian soldiers got on. That was our first taste of Russia, these two soldiers with their long coats, strolling through the train, looking mildly around, in contrast to the Polish ones who marched through and glared fiercely at you.

Then we came to the Russian border and a lot of big fellows came in and got hold of our baggage and carried it into the customs room. I looked around for the big red arch that is there, but couldn't see it on account of the darkness. They made no trouble about anything that we had, and so, while waiting for train time, we went into the buffet and had a sandwich and a bottle of beer, which cost us two and a half rubles. The Russians tax strangers quite a bit this way; until you get settled and used to things you have to hand out money on every side. We had to pay five dollars extra fare on the big Russian train, but for that we got a bench apiece to sleep on. We could have had a mattress and pillow for a dollar apiece extra, but our funds were too low.

Our first real touch of Russia was in the station. It was made of natural colored wood, the kind you see in pictures, and had red propaganda flags and pictures of Lenin, Marx, Stalin and others hanging about. Red soldiers were everywhere. I asked one of them, as best I could, what they had in the way of pipe tobacco here, and he misunderstood and thought I was trying to borrow a load. He offered me some *mahorka,* which is terrible stuff made from a weed similar to tobacco and smells like burning cloth. Dave and I sat there eating our sandwiches, made of good black bread, saying: "By God, we're in Russia!"

In the matter of hotels [in Moscow], we couldn't find a single place to stay. The first night we wanted to bunk on the floor of P——'s apartment because he has so much room, but the hotel said No. Then we went around to several hotels and phoned a lot more, but they didn't have even a single room. Finally, at eleven o'clock at night, at the Grand, we told the man that we were going to spend the night sitting in the lobby and he did give us a room then. We are there now and have stayed here two nights at the rate of nine rubles a night. Our room is swell but of course we have to get out of here in a hurry because of the price. We visit a lot of small hotels (there are only about twenty hotels altogether in the town, so space in them is scarce) every day, but so far nothing doing. But today we went to see the English Quakers, or Society of Friends, and met two women there. They know of a room just vacated by an American professor which they think they can get for us in two days. It costs ninety rubles a month, and we are lucky to get it for that. We arrived at the border with about forty dollars, and now we have about twenty left, with hotel bill paid to date. Moscow is the most unusual place that I have ever struck, and certainly is different from anything I have ever seen before. It is going to be hard, or certainly is now, for us to stay here. But we are determined to stick the winter out, no matter what happens. Then, if we have to leave, we shall have had that experience, and nobody can take it away from us. We feel rather unsettled but we figure that we can manage once we get going. R. K.

It is bad enough to arrive in a strange, cold city, but to arrive in such a city and have a hell of a time to find a place to lay our heads at night is much worse. Miss E—— at the Quakers cheered us up a bit. She not only gave us hope that there might be one room in the whole city that we might get hold of if we are lucky, but she seems to be in the know as regards English teaching and says that although this is the worst time of the year to get a grip on things, there really is a demand for English teachers and that in a little while we may be able to get going on something. As for me, I am sure that there must be something for a couple of willing Americans to do in this big city and I intend unearthing it sooner or later. D. K.

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This is Christmas Day, although it doesn't seem a bit like it because the Russians don't observe it, as it is a religious holiday. Also, with the five-day week in effect, as it is now, all days seem alike, as, in fact, they are. The snow on everything is beautiful and although the temperature has stuck down around four degrees above zero (Fahrenheit), we do not suffer from the cold. My nose, chin and hands get a bit cold now and then, but thanks to nice woolen underwear and a marvelous high-collared coat, my body has not been cold yet. It will have to get a lot colder before it can bother either of us.

We eat only one real meal a day, in the Russian style. So far we have taken this meal in the Grand Hotel, once P—— paying, and once the American Babbitt tractor man whom we met at P——'s the first night we were here. We eat breakfast in restaurants called *stolovayas*. They are poor. The one this morning wouldn't give us any bread. It seems that bread is on a ration. They aren't short of it, and they don't want to be, hence this measure. They have ration cards for sugar, butter, eggs, meat and other things too. Most people eat at home, and so will we, once we get a room. We have a swell room in this hotel. I wish the government would decide we were valuable persons and give it to us free. But I didn't come to Moscow for comfort and don't expect it. It's good not to have it, for a change. It teaches the real values of life. Berlin for comfort. I shall spend a week there some day. But I haven't known any discomfort yet to compare with that we had on our two ships, working our way over.

Our procedure in the *stolovaya*, when hunger drives us into one, is to walk up to a sort of cashier's desk and mumble out what we want as best we can. The cashier gives us tickets for the price of our food and we pay her. Then we go over to the food counter and hand the tickets to the waiters behind them and they give us our food. This we take to a table and eat either sitting down or standing up as we choose. Because of our small knowledge of the language, we sometimes get something entirely different from what we think we are getting. The other morning we made a dreadful mistake and got an enormous plateful of tripe. We generally get a glass of tea, bread and some sort of hot dish like buckwheat. Two bits is about as high as we like to pay for this.

We are getting started now, and before long may be on our own feet. Last night we went to see D—— and he had another fellow there who teaches English, a Russian. They knew a lot of possible jobs for us and are working on them now. We may start some classes in a couple of days, and at any rate we shall start on the first of the year. They send some engineering groups to America to study every year and they are anxious that these groups have American English teachers, so that they may be able to understand them. This is our meat. The men belong to the metal-trust union, and the minute we have a public class we can get into a trade union. They have several lines they are working on for us now, and assure us that it is only a matter of a short time until we get started, because there is plenty of demand for English teachers. They also said there are a lot of private people who want lessons and that we can fill in our time with these after we have public classes.

We are moving out of the Grand today, thank God. D—— is going to put us up for the night and his young Russian friend has a mother in the hospital, so one of us will stay in her room. I hope we can get settled down some place and unpack our stuff. I went up with Ishi this morning to see where I am going to stay tonight. It is up by the station and is not an attractive spot, but we are saving what we should have to pay them at the hotel. After inspecting the room I stopped in a neighboring *stolovaya* and for breakfast had a plate of *shchi* soup, some tea and bread. I am gradually learning the names of the Russian dishes they serve in these places so that soon I shall be able to order what I want. We live a very simple life as regards food, and somehow you don't mind it here. I would never put up with it at home. I suppose it is because you realize that there isn't anything else. Coming back here to the hotel I took a bus for the first time. They are English buses and they go like hell over the frozen streets. It's a wonder more people aren't killed by them. R. K.

I have my first job! Five times a week I go out to the AMO Motor Works and teach a class of about four or five, from twelve-thirty to one-thirty. My students are bright and eager. They are all about thirty. They want conversation, so all I do is to sit and gossip with them for an hour a day. For this I am paid four rubles an hour. After the lesson I go into the big factory dining room and have lunch. The dining room is an enormous place, with long tables running across the room, an aisle in the center. At one end is a cashier's box, where food tickets are purchased. At the other end is the kitchen, where you hand in your tickets in exchange for food. The food is rough and very good, better than is served in the restaurants and cheaper. The helpings are about twice the size of the restaurant servings. I have given just two lessons so far. Both times I had a large dish of excellent cabbage soup with a large piece of meat and sour cream in it. An enormous piece of black bread goes with it. After devouring that I felt full. It costs about eight cents. D. K.

My pupils put me through a thorough quiz on how and why I came here and what are the exact conditions of workers in America. I could tell

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them why and how I came here, but when it came to the workers' conditions I had to tell them that they were different in different industries and in the various parts of the country. They love to ask personal questions, but on the whole it is fun. I have also a private pupil. He reads English well and wants practice in conversation. He is intelligent and wide-awake and is now studying the methods of the Bell Telephone Company in America. For each lesson he will pick some phase of the telephone business and give me a lecture on it. This makes an interesting and instructive hour for me and he pays me three rubles for it. I have my eye on several more group classes and several more private lessons. It is a slow job to get anything started here, but we hope to be well under way soon.

I like Moscow better hour by hour. It has the nicest, quaintest, little winding streets of any city I have seen so far. This morning I went into a market place. It reminded me of that big arcade in Milan. This one is much larger. Inside, under the towering roof, are a lot of little stores or booths. It is almost like a little town in one building. They have every sort of store imaginable. I walked back through some little curving streets and entered the market by the back way. These streets are narrow, and twist around, and every now and then go under an archway. There are a lot of interesting-looking magazines in the little magazine shops around the streets. They have excellent pictures in them. As soon as we have a better command of this Russian language we shall buy a lot of them. We spend almost as much money on stamps as we do on food. It costs fourteen kopecks to send a letter to the States, and it mounts up.

We have to work a month on some public thing before we can join a union and get our food tickets so that we may buy food in the markets and eat at home. But we are getting to be regular Muscovites, nevertheless. At first we felt insecure in the town, in the restaurants and on the street cars. But now we are old hands and don't care who stares at us. We order food in the restaurants, jump on street cars, bump people on the street, mangle them in the tram crowds, just like the other inhabitants. We are continually astounding people with our knowledge of the winding streets of the town. The longer we are here, the better we like it. D. K.

I notice a bourgeois tendency among the people to dress up in ties, suits and white shirts. The people at the theaters look like a poor version of a middle-class theater crowd in America. Of course, there are a lot who still dress the way they please and there are the uniforms, but I fear that the ties predominate. I wear what I please. We are both happy, healthy and in excellent spirits.

Well, we have our little room! We slept in it last night. D—— is the cause of our getting it. Our host, B——, happened to drop in on him and D—— asked him if he knew of a room, with the result that we are installed here, paying sixty rubles a month. It is about the size of a small garage. For furniture we have one three-quarter bed, a big desk, two chairs and a wardrobe. Our bedclothes consist of one blanket and a sheet. When we throw our nice heavy overcoats on top of us we are warm and comfy as can be, so comfortable that it is hard to get up in the morning. It is only temporary, we hope, as we have to pass through the room of our host and his wife to enter our den, and this makes it unhandy. Friend host is a fellow of my age and he has been married four years. He was a Count before the revolution. His family emerged from obscurity when one of his ancestors became a lover of Catherine the Great. He is a nice chap, speaks English and seems happy, although God knows what kind of work he can do in this country, considering his ancestry. They never give that kind of person a job with any trust attached to it. They are very nice to us and feed us tea every chance they get. R. K.

My pupils are all crazy to go to America. They say they have nothing to learn from us economically, but a lot scientifically. They told me today about the pensions and arrangements made for mothers in the factories of the U. S. S. R. I knew it already, but it was interesting to hear it first hand. I tell them about graft, bootlegging, roads, buildings, colleges and other things in America.

We have received copies of X——'s articles about Russia in The S—— Magazine. Almost every statement in them was an out and out lie, and those that were not actually flat lies were very misleading. I've been in Moscow three weeks now and I haven't seen so much as a bare toe, much less a bare foot. I read these articles to my class to show them what people read about them in America. They laughed and held their sides. If someone told you that droves of wild buffalo were continually stampeding through the streets of San Francisco, you would feel about as they did when I read them that cock-and-bull story of X——'s. You would think a reputable periodical would be ashamed to print it. D. K.

We have now been here one day over three weeks. I feel like an old resident. I have started in on my newspaper job with Y——. I can see that it is going to be an interesting job. Today Y—— took me over to meet one of the censors. He asked about some kind of correspondents' card for me and the man said he thought it could be arranged. Every news cable that goes out has to be passed by the censor, so it is important to know them. R. K.

DAVID AND ROBIN KINKEAD.

In the second instalment of their letters, to appear in next week's issue of The New Republic, the Kinkead brothers will describe their lives as working units in the great Soviet machine.—THE EDITORS.

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Fight the Good Fight

IT WAS perhaps unfortunate for Christians that the Apostle Paul enunciated the three Christian virtues in this order: faith, hope and charity; for, although he went on to say that the greatest of these is charity, he allowed faith the first place. And it is faith, faith divorced from hope, faith bereft of charity, which comes first in the Christian Church today. Faith (that is to say: creed) is what the Church is strong on.

Of the hundreds of sects into which the Christian Church has split, those which do not claim to be the one true fragment are few, and all think that perhaps, at some future day of judgment, they may be told to go up higher. Of the prominent claimants for present supremacy, the Protestant Episcopal Church, though small in membership, is one of the outstanding. Of all the Episcopal bishops, Bishop Manning of New York is easily the first in the eyes of his countrymen who read the daily paper. It is no accident that Bishop Manning figures so often and so largely in the metropolitan press. His recent row with Judge Lindsey, which culminated in the Judge's advertised visit to the Bishop's advertised sermon, the Judge's note taking while the Bishop preached against him, the Judge's leaping up on a press table to reply as the Bishop turned away, the Judge's hurried ejection by police while the Bishop called for the next hymn—some such unedifying row as this was bound to happen. That it was Judge Lindsey who brought it about is a minor matter; for the Bishop, whether or not he likes publicity, is hewing out the kind of career whose incidents draw reporters like eagles to the carcass.

The Bishop is good copy because he has rows, but the controversies in which he figures get him into the news oftener than they should. When he makes the front page with what looks like some flat, harsh, controversial statement, forbidding his clergy to treat their Protestant brothers as equals, there are usually enough mutters from his more liberal rectors to make a newspaper story out of the incident; but if you will notice, muttering is all that happens. For the Bishop is always technically right. Whether or not his Pharisaic attitude is driving away the publicans and sinners to seek other Masters than his own, his worst enemy must admit that the Bishop knows the Law.

The popular opinion of Bishop Manning is not high. He has no personal magnetism, he is not a first-class preacher; the faith he reiterates is too often couched in the accents of righteous indignation. He is always discovering new objects, new tendencies in modern life which the Christian must pronounce anathema: it looks as if he would never run out of subjects for his sermons. Popular opinion does not like Bishop Manning, but it does grant him this: that he believes in himself as a leader of the Church, and that he is doing his job as he thinks it ought to be done.

The Church is an organization in which politics plays a large part. Bishop Manning is High Church, authoritarian; many of his rectors are Low Church. Consequently a good deal of the Bishop's activity is expended on simply looking after his fences. With the party system as sharply defined as it is in the Church today, Church quarrels which may seem to the layman signs of civil war and imminent dissolution are in reality only the day-to-day skirmishing of political parties. It is naturally to the interest of Bishop Manning's opponents (and they are a strong minority in his own diocese) to make as much thunder as possible out of every administrative cloud that rises over the diocesan horizon. The man who is really responsible for Bishop Manning's being such a newspaper figure is not the Bishop himself but his alter ego, the flint to his steel, the Reverend Alexander G. Cummins of Poughkeepsie. It is safe to say that every resolution condemning the Bishop's attitude, every manifesto deploring the Bishop's reactionary stand, every editorial inquiring how now, Bishop Manning, has the figure of Dr. Cummins, leader of the opposition, behind it. A good enough parliamentarian to know the unwisdom of a frontal attack when a flanking movement will serve, he rarely launches shock troops, but contents himself with a constant guerilla warfare against the episcopal outposts. The Chronicle (a monthly magazine which he publishes in Poughkeepsie) is apparently dedicated to the proposition that God hates an Anglo-Catholic.

It may shock some laymen to discover that the outward and visible signs of the Church's inward and spiritual grace are not very different from similar machinations in Congress; but why should it? Men are men, no matter what kind of collars they wear: there are bound to be Heflins, and Jimmy Walkers, and Bishop Cannons—yes, and Dr. Cumminses and Bishop Mannings—in every organization big enough to hold them. And politics is politics. Do the Democrats pine with grief when a Republican Senator lets his party in for a lot of damaging publicity? Do they say what a pity it is that a fellow member of Congress should have put things in just that unfortunate way, and how sorry they are that the good name of the Congress may suffer on account of it? Or do they jump for joy, and proceed to make as much political damage as

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possible whenever a concatenation of circumstances offers them a lucky break?

The hymn Bishop Manning called for immediately after the ejection of Judge Lindsey from the Cathedral was not the hymn on the printed program. He announced instead a more appropriate rallying cry: "Fight the good fight with all thy might." And which of you politicians will cast the first stone?

T. S. MATTHEWS.

Foster and Fish

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER, the leader of the American Communists, is facing Hamilton Fish, the chairman of the House Committee appointed to investigate Communist activities.

Hamilton Fish is a man of immense stature, in a dark blue suit and a very tall stiff white collar. He has coarse features, broad shoulders and a slightly finicking manner and looks like a Hannibal turned tailor's dummy or a blank-eyed vacuous Bashan bull. Unlike most officials conducting examinations of radicals and unlike certain of his colleagues, he has excellent manners and never bullies or insults the witnesses—though there is a perceptible difference in cordiality between his manner in thanking Roger Baldwin very much for his testimony and his manner in thanking the Communists very much. He is quiet, dignified and patient, but his hands tremble violently throughout the proceedings and he is always rubbing his forehead. A smile intended to imply irony and skepticism plays continually about his mouth, but it suggests rather simple nervousness.

Mr. Foster is nervous, too. Half Irish and born in Massachusetts, he seems almost excessively sensitive at the same time that he is fortified and sustained by a Yankee tenacity and hardness. He has blue eyes, a bald crown, a finely modeled brow and nose, a small mobile Irish mouth and a plebeian Irish lantern jaw. He is an incongruous figure in the marble halls of the Capitol and his peculiar kind of eloquence is a new one to congressional committee rooms. At moments he seems an American workman with a grievance attempting to defend his rights to his employer—he looks worried and harassed, his dropped hands with curled-up fingers make constrained ineffective gestures, his voice sinks to a whisper of pathos as if he were sighing to himself his hopelessness of communicating with his opponents. He often smiles even more self-consciously when Mr. Fish asks him a question than Mr. Fish does when he hears the answer. Yet never once in the course of the three hours' grueling does his courage or his presence of mind fail him. Though he may falter for a moment before answering, he always picks himself up and meets the question; and as soon as he meets the question, he is the dominating figure in the room.

It is the orthodox procedure of Communism to use public appearances of all kinds as pretexts for propagandist speeches: this is an integral feature of their technique and all newly recruited Communists are instructed in it. When Charles Ruthenberg, for example, was commanded by a district attorney to answer yes or no, he would reply: "The workers expect no justice from capitalist courts!" This practice has its value: it enables the Communist to cut out the ground from under the assumptions on which the charges against him rest, to substitute his own version of the case for the version of the society which is trying him. But Foster on the present occasion follows this procedure almost a little too faithfully: one sometimes feels that he is doing it on principle when his replies would be more effective if he merely answered the questions. Furthermore, an element appears in his language which is quite alien to anything which hitherto has been characteristic of the militant American workman—it is the idiom of Russian Communism. Foster today always deals in "ideologies" instead of "ideas," and he is always talking about "liquidating" things. "Liquidating" something means getting rid of it. In Russia, they liquidated the *kulaks,* they liquidated the Church—and the other day the Soviet prosecutor demanded that the guilty engineers be liquidated—in other words, shot. And the House Committee may well sometimes have been puzzled by Foster's continual talk of liquidation as applied to everything from the collapse of capitalism to the dispersal of the recent Communist demonstration at Washington by the Capitol police. But all this is merely the platform of radical oratory to which Foster is obliged to lift himself to find a ground firm beneath his feet to face the policemen, the marble tomb of the Capitol haunted by the sepulchral echoes, the heroic specters of the past, the fat congressmen, the eagle and shield of the Republic, the high, imposing gilt and white ceiling, the wilderness of documents on the big table, the female admirers of Mr. Fish and Mr. Fish's gentlemanly manners. Once safe on the plane of his faith, he can meet his opponents with a logic, a conviction, a New England force and an Irish readiness which contrast startlingly and overwhelmingly with the incompetence and unsureness of the Committee.

Mr. Foster, after being sworn in as an atheist, first reads in a clear emphatic voice, dwelling recurrently with bitter significance on certain words, an uncompromising statement of his position:

> The Fish Committee is supposed to be investigating Communist activities in the United States. It is impossible to understand Communist activities unless one

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knows the conditions of the working class in this country, upon which these activities are based. Today more than nine million workers are unemployed and deprived of all means of living. There is nothing left for them except the breadlines and miserable charity crumbs. Thousands upon thousands of working-class families have been thrown out of their homes because they can no longer pay their rent. Those who are still employed are having their wages slashed and are being speeded up beyond the limit of human endurance. In the streets of every large city, workers are dropping dying and dead from starvation and exposure. Every newspaper in the country constantly reports suicides of these workers, driven to desperation by unemployment and starvation. The Communist activities are the organized protest and struggle of the masses against these conditions.

What is the cause of this starvation, misery and hardship of the millions of workers in the United States? Is it because some great national calamity has destroyed the food, clothing and shelter available for the people? No, on the contrary. Millions of workers must go hungry because there is too much wheat. Millions of workers must go without clothes because the warehouses are full to overflowing with everything that is needed. Millions of workers must freeze because there is too much coal. This is the logic of the capitalist system which the Fish Committee is protecting against the protests of the workers.

He then goes on to review the recent catalogue of outrages and crimes against the workers: Imperial Valley, Gastonia, Centralia, Danville, Atlanta—and advises the Southern members of the Committee to look into conditions in their own constituencies if they wish to understand the spread of Communism among Negroes. He describes the condition of the farmers—"hunger, poverty, wholesale bankruptcies, dispossession of hundreds of thousands, the most tremendous overproduction of wealth and the consequent ruin and starvation of those who produce it." He declares that the A. F. of L. has arrived at such a perfect understanding with the capitalists against whom it is supposed to be a defense that it has become to all intents and purposes a professional strike-breaking organization, as well as an ally of the underworld and a breeder of racketeers, themselves a part of the capitalist system of municipal government. Nor has the present economic crisis brought merely unemployment, wage cuts, speeding-up, starvation and misery for the masses—it has brought us also face to face with a new war:

In spite of all the fake Kellogg peace pacts, disarmament conferences, etc., the imperialist governments, especially the United States and Great Britain, are arming themselves to the teeth against one another, preparing for a new world slaughter. Almost three-fourths of the government income in the United States is spent for war purposes. . . .

The preparations for imperialist war are today concentrated against the Soviet Union. The enormous success of the Five Year Plan of Socialist Construction in the Soviet Union has filled the hearts of our capitalist rulers with fear and panic and desperate rage. The Soviet Union is revolutionizing the working class of the entire world by its very existence, and by the contrast which it presents to the conditions of workers under capitalism. While in the United States more than nine million workers are unemployed, in the Soviet Union unemployment has been completely abolished and there is an acute shortage of labor. While in the United States wages of the working class are being slashed by eight billion dollars, in the Soviet Union the wages of the working class are steadily increasing and are now 67 percent above pre-war wages. While in the United States capitalist rationalization is destroying the health of the workers and throwing ever greater numbers into the ranks of the unemployed, in the Soviet Union every stage in industrial progress is raising the living standards of the workers. While in the United States even the eight-hour day has never been established except for a few privileged groups, the average hours of labor being around forty-nine per week, and large numbers of workers slave for ten, eleven and twelve hours per day, in the Soviet Union no one works more than eight hours, and the seven-hour day has already been established for half of the industrial workers. . . .

While in the United States every worker lives under the lash of fear of being discharged at the arbitrary will of his boss, and is spied upon at every turn, in the Soviet Union the worker is the master of his job and the workers' organizations control the factories. . . .

The Communist party is leading and organizing the struggle against the imperialist war and for the defense of the Soviet Union. That is why the workers are turning toward the Communist party and that is why the Fish Committee is investigating Communism with a view to find new measures to suppress the workers and the Communist party, as a part of the preparations for war. . . .

The Fish Committee has spent many months trying to convince the public that the Communist party is an organization of criminal violence, with the purpose of preparing the ground for the suppression of the Communist party. This is nothing but hypocritical nonsense. If the theories of this Committee were logically carried through, the Committee would have to indict on the same accusation those who died on the battlefields of the American Revolution in the struggle to free the United States from the rule of the British landlords. . . . These revolutionists of capitalism, who freed America from feudal European rule, found out that the ruling class of Britain refused independence to the colonies in spite of the overwhelming desire of the people as expressed in the provincial legislatures. When the British ruling class met these demands for independence with armed force, these early revolutionists found that government is not a matter of majority votes, but the organized power which does not give way to the desires of the majority but only to a greater power. It was then that they decided that it was "their right," that it was "their duty, to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security. . . ." The same law of history will operate in the transition from capitalism to socialism. The bloody path that capitalism is traveling today over the lives of the workers is conclusive proof that when the workers, who are the majority, will become convinced by their own experience of the

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> necessity of changing the capitalist order based upon private property and the enrichment of the few, into a society based upon common ownership of the means of production and the well being of the masses, then the capitalists will use their last gun and their last dollar in defense of the only constitutional principle they ever really held sacred—that is, the unrestricted right to make profit out of the misery of the masses. . . . The Communist party is preparing the working class for that day. . . . The Communist party prepares the working class to carry out in the proletarian revolution that principle announced by the Colonial revolutionists in the Declaration of Independence: "it is the right, it is the duty," of the working masses to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security. The only possible guard for the future security of the working class is the dictatorship of the proletariat and the establishment of a Soviet government.

When Foster has finished reading, the members of the Committee cross-examine him—if one can apply the word cross-examination to an inquiry so aimless and diffuse. Representative Bachmann of West Virginia is the first to take the witness. Representative Bachmann of West Virginia is by way of being the caricaturist's ideal of the lower order of congressman: he is well larded, with small black eyes and a long nose, he talks with a cigar in his mouth tilted up at an arrogant angle and he questions Mr. Foster with a persistent and almost pathetic stupidity which he tries to conceal with a great air of cunning. He begins by asking whether Mr. Foster has prepared his statement himself—Mr. Foster says that he did. Representative Bachmann wants to know where he got his information to the effect that the Negroes are "disfranchised" in West Virginia—Representative Bachmann asserts that the Negroes in West Virginia have the franchise. Mr. Foster replies that they don't get to vote just the same, and adds that they are discriminated against by a general policy of Jim Crowism. Representative Bachmann denies this and says that there is a statute against it. None the less, Mr. Foster insists, nobody pays any attention to the statute—and, as a matter of fact, both whites and blacks in the South have been reduced to a condition of peonage under gunman rule—and particularly in West Virginia. Representative Bachmann shifts to a different line of attack and accuses Mr. Foster of trying to take advantage of the unemployment situation to mislead the unemployed. Mr. Foster replies that on the contrary it is the capitalists who take advantage of the workers. Representative Bachmann wants to know how Mr. Foster proposes to prevent unemployment?—By socialism, says Mr. Foster.—So, says the Representative, you would increase unemployment by insurance?—I said relieve it, not increase it, says Foster. Representative Bachmann intimates that if the unemployed got insurance, they would never do any work at all. Then he shifts again and asks sarcastically where the witness got his unemployment figures.—Mr. Foster cites Dr. Steuart of the Census Bureau, who put the unemployed at 9,000,000—reminding him that the Bureau was under suspicion of having falsified its earlier and lower estimates; the statement of the A. F. of L., which put the figure at 4,800,000, not counting office workers, agricultural workers and part-time workers probably totaling another 4,000,000; and an authority in the British Labor government who has asserted that if American unemployment were estimated in the same way as in England, it would amount to from ten to twelve million.

Mr. Bachmann makes no reply, but with a shrewd, humorous, skeptical look, changes the subject again: How many Communists are there in the United States?—Foster says that there are ten to twelve thousand dues-paying members of the party.—And how many of these are foreigners? (The large proportion of foreigners among the Communists seems to be a special matter of interest to Mr. Bachmann, whose first name is Carl and whose mother's maiden name is given in "Who's Who" as Neuhardt.)—About the same proportion as in American labor as a whole—from 60 to 70 percent.—And how many of those are aliens?—Foster doesn't know, but says that most of them are naturalized—the party always encourages them to take out naturalization papers so that they can vote—in the last election 75,000 people voted the Communist ticket.—How many Communist sympathizers are there—as many as 2,000,000?—Foster says that this question has no sense, but that he regards the whole American working class as potentially Communist.—How many of the Communists are Negroes?—About 10 percent.—There ensues a long series of questions intended to elicit various statistics as to the number of Communist votes in the various states in the various elections, the membership of the T. U. U. L., etc., etc.—Foster says that he didn't bring these figures, but will gladly furnish them to the Committee.—Representative Bachmann goes on and on asking the questions, however, with his air of invincible purposiveness and slyness—he has evidently thought them all up beforehand and written them all out on a piece of paper and when he has come to the end of them he will not have anything more left to ask, and he is not going to let the rascally Communist off so easily—so he flounders about with his questionnaire, receiving in every case the same answer from Foster: that he didn't bring the statistics with him, but will gladly see that the Committee gets them—he intimates that they might have gotten them themselves.

And indeed one of the most striking features of this Committee which has been investigating the Communists for six months is its apparent ignorance of everything connected with Communism. They do not seem to know even so much about Russia as one would suppose any ordinary newspaper reader these days could hardly help picking up. They do not know what the Third International is and have to have Foster explain it to them from the bottom up, and then they get very much mixed

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up when Foster goes on to refer to it as the Communist International—pounce on him as if he were trying to put something over on them by substituting one organization for another—the word "Communist" is always suspicious—and have to receive his earnest assurances that the Third International and the Communist International are notoriously the same thing. The Committee seems not even to have taken the trouble to provide itself with the Communist publications, in which they could have found the answers to most of their questions: Mr. Fish, for instance, has apparently no knowledge of the management and contents of The Daily Worker, and even goes so far as to inquire whether it is published every day. And they not only ask Foster repeatedly what he understands by Communism, a question perhaps defensible—but want to know, also, what he means by capitalism, a word which seems honestly to puzzle them.

Representative Nelson of Maine takes up the inquiry after Representative Bachmann. He is a portly man with a white waistcoat and a red carnation in his buttonhole. He asks Mr. Foster whether he knows how many men there are in the Red Army. Foster says he doesn't remember. Mr. Nelson next demands severely how many men there are in the American Army. Foster, fresh from Mr. Bachmann's questionnaire, says that he will gladly furnish the Committee with this information. What Mr. Nelson is evidently getting at is that there are enough men in the Red Army to make trifling with Russia very dangerous. Yet Mr. Nelson shows more decency and sense than any of the other members of the Committee and seems to some extent at odds with the rest of them: he takes up very little time himself and does his best to cut short the more obviously futile maneuvers of the others—at one point he announces rather sulkily that he objects, and has "objected from the beginning to these questions about the personal lives of the witnesses."

Mr. Fish follows Mr. Nelson. Mr. Fish has certain simple objectives in view based upon fixed and simple ideas. And it is, in consequence, no part of his purpose to find out what Mr. Foster's ideas are or why he thinks as he does—his sole aim is to induce Mr. Foster to admit that his own, Mr. Fish's, ideas are true. Mr. Fish is, I am sure, an idealist. There is a tradition of public service in his family—his grandfather was Secretary of State under Grant—and he supposes himself—there is no doubt of it—to be defending the imperishable principles of the Republic. But those fixed and simple ideas, which make it impossible for him to observe what the Republic at the present day is like, constitute a fundamental obstacle to his understanding what Mr. Foster is talking about. When Foster fails to give the answer which will confirm Mr. Fish's ideas, Mr. Fish simply bides his time and asks the question again later on.—Will Mr. Foster state the aims and principles of the Communist party?—To organize the workers to defend their interests under the capitalist system and eventually to abolish the capitalist system and establish a workers' government.—Does this mean the confiscation of private property?—It means the confiscation of the basic industries, the communization of the essentials of life—of private possessions, no.[1]—What is your attitude toward religion?—I believe that religion is the opium of the people—as Karl Marx says.—Mr. Fish here tries to make the most of the anti-religious aspect of Communism, and Foster, where he might easily evade this issue is determined to let them have the works; when Mr. Fish asks whether it is possible to belong to a church and be a Communist at the same time, Foster replies that it is possible, but that if a person doesn't cease to be religious very soon after joining the Communist party, he will probably be a very poor Communist; and when Fish inquires whether a member of the party can be married in church, Foster answers that in his opinion any member of the party who marries in church will be of no value to the party.—Are the Communists opposed to our Republican form of government?—Surely: our government is controlled by those who own the industries. Gerard told the truth the other day when he gave his list of the men who rule the country.—Do the Communists in the United States take orders from the Third International?—*(contemptuously repeating the question)* Do Communists in the United States take orders from the Third International! That shows how far the capitalists are from the workers! The Communists in the United States *work out policies* with the Third International!—Do you advocate a Soviet government in the United States?—Capitalism must inevitably break down and be superseded.—Do the Communists regard the Soviet flag as their flag?—The workers of the world have only one flag—the red flag.—Do you look forward to a Socialist revolution in the United States?—I know that the capitalist system is bankrupt! You look all over the world and you see it in a state of collapse!—Mr. Fish returns again and again to that question of allegiance to Russia—not harshly, but with an air of polite William Gillette comedy: And so you owe allegiance—er—to Russia—to the Soviet Republic? But Mr. Foster, who has been trying to explain the difference between the Third International and the Soviets, simply refers him to the record, and Mr. Fish, still, one supposes, with a picture in his mind of Mr. Foster betraying America to an imperialistic Moscow which will annex the whole United States and split up large estates on the Hudson, finally gives the witness up to Mr. Eslick of Tennessee.

Mr. Eslick's examination is brief but very noble. Mr. Eslick is rather an old gentleman: he wears an old-fashioned, open congressional collar and a black ante-bellum bow tie, and he has been

[1] Reported in The New York Times as follows: ". . . of private possessions *now*." This is only one instance of several in which The Times misrepresented Foster in such a way as to make him appear to have said exactly the opposite of what he did say.

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sitting all through the session with his arms hanging limply down beside his chair and his mouth gaping as if he suffered from some difficulty of breathing or as if his jaw muscles were too feeble to keep it closed. But when it devolves upon him to take up the inquiry, he is not found lacking in dignity: he demands in the proud accents of Southern oratory whether Mr. Foster advocates the overthrow of the government by "force *and* violence?"—The controlling class, says Mr. Foster, never give up without a struggle.—And you owe loyalty not to your country but to Russia?—I owe loyalty to the workers of the world. Russia is not the world.—Mr. Eslick goes on immediately to what is evidently the thing that chiefly exercises him—Mr. Foster's aspersions on the fair Southland: Mr. Eslick takes exception to Mr. Foster's reflections on the administration of justice in the state of Tennessee. Mr. Foster reminds Mr. Eslick that there have been a great many lynchings in Tennessee. We lynch, says Mr. Eslick magnificently, but we lynch the white man as well as the black—for one offense, we lynch a man, it doesn't make any difference whether he's white or black!—Yes, says Mr. Foster, about a thousand blacks to one white.—So you make no distinction between the races? says Mr. Eslick.—None, says Mr. Foster.—You believe in white people and black people marrying?—Certainly, says Mr. Foster, I believe in people marrying whoever they want to.

Finally, the question of Russian gold is agitated and Mr. Foster announces with some heat that, in spite of the statements of Matthew Woll and others, the American Communists are not lavishly endowed by Russia, that their salaries, when they get any, are paid out of contributions by the workers, and that he himself gets $20 a week, except when times are hard as at present, when he only gets $10.

Israel Amter follows Foster. He is a dark, intense and fine-looking Jew, who answers the questions promptly and positively: he is good-humored and firm. One is reminded as one watches Amter, even more than in the case of Foster, that the Communists are at once the apostles of a religion and the captains of an army, sworn to industry, discipline and endurance, renouncing the common satisfactions of the society in which they live to fight for a conviction which runs counter to all the values of that society and which can never win them anything but poverty as it is unlikely to lead them anywhere but to jail. The Fish Committee does not, to be sure, represent the American government at its best; but in the presence of the Communists today the legislators of "our republican form of government" seem utterly lacking in moral force and intellectual dignity. Even Roger Baldwin of the Civil Liberties Union, who is examined later in the session, though one of the last surviving champions of our supposed republican rights and in spite of his making an admirable statement double-damning the Committee to its face, seems a perplexed and divided man: his heartiness is a little self-conscious, as if it were costing him an effort to remain on terms of good-fellowship with the Communists, for whom he has just announced that the Civil Liberties Union will no longer undertake to raise bail, and to treat on a plane of equality with the Committee, who to all intents and purposes deny that American civil liberties exist. The Communists have the great advantage in America of knowing exactly what they want and having adopted an uncompromising policy to get it: in spite of their pedantry, their conspiratorial leanings, their dependence on an alien tradition and their consequent partial incomprehensibility to the people they have set out to convert, this gives them a kind of strength which perhaps no other group in America, conservative or radical, possesses. When one has seen the Communists before the Fish Committee, one is no longer sure that, in spite of their faults and their small numbers, they are so unimportant as we are usually told. It may be that there is a real reason, after all, for Mr. Fish's feeling so uncomfortable about them: they are people who are willing to die for a religion.

In the midst of Mr. Baldwin's denunciation of the Committee, Mr. Bachmann insists on interrupting and unexpectedly protests that he at least has not "prejudged the evidence," as Mr. Baldwin has asserted, "by announcing their remedies before they have heard the testimony"—that he wants Mr. Baldwin to understand that he has no personal feeling in the matter, that he is sitting on the Committee merely because he was appointed to.—Last of all, one of the most untrustworthy characters who has surely ever been called upon to testify to anything, a pale-eyed, shifty-eyed, shaved-headed man, represented as an honest Russian farmer sent to prison for criticizing the Soviets, describes to the Committee by way of an interpreter the horrors of forced labor in a Russian lumber camp. This makes the Committee feel a little better. Mr. Fish for the first time today is able to drop his ironic smile.

The day after tomorrow will be Mr. Fish's birthday and on the big shiny mahogany table in the anteroom of the Foreign Affairs Committee there is already a whole florist's display of chrysanthemums in ornamental baskets, the tributes of the Union Club and other admirers.—Foster, Amter and a man from The Daily Worker are overtaken on their way out of the Capitol by the chief of the Capitol Guard, an old, respectable and earnest policeman with gold spectacles and a square white mustache, who tells them that the Capitol is closed and compels them severely to follow his escort down through Statuary Hall past the founders and heroes of the Republic, frozen in their marble wax-works-show, till he has seen them out at one of the underneath doors. They take a taxi alone to the station and get the next train back to New York.

EDMUND WILSON.

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Virginians on Strike

DANVILLE, Virginia, which threatens to become the Gastonia of 1930-1931, is a small city of 22,000. The people are almost entirely native Virginians, just as their forebears were for generations back. It is one of the oldest mill towns in the South. The Riverside and the Dan River Cotton Mills, owned and operated by a single company, were built nearly half a century ago. They are the biggest thing in town, and in the past were known as exceptionally well managed establishments. In the last three decades the capital value of the company increased from $1,500,000 to $17,500,000.

Before the War the loom fixers, who form one of the most important worker groups in any textile mill, were organized in an independent union which on numerous occasions was recognized by the management and won demands for minor improvements of the working conditions in the mills. But in 1919, to head off further developments of unionism, the management started a company union and called it "Industrial Democracy," with a "house of representatives" for the workers, a "senate" for the overseers, a "cabinet" for the company officials and the "veto power" for the president-treasurer of the company, Mr. Harry R. Fitzgerald, who had always had a paternalistic attitude toward his employees.

This "Industrial Democracy," as the mill people realize now, was a method employed by the management to impress the employees with its benevolence toward them. Though the wages were low, generally speaking, they were a trifle higher than textile workers' wages elsewhere in the South. The hours were long, but no longer than in other Southern mills, and the work was hard, but no harder than in some of the Northern mills.

But when, in common with the entire cotton-textile industry in the United States, the company was affected by a business depression, it began to "stretch out" its production, and in an effort to keep up its profits the mills in Danville began to swarm with efficiency engineers, imported from the North. Workers who formerly had tended from twelve to eighteen looms and received from $25 to $27 a week for fifty-five hours' work now were required to tend from twenty-four to thirty-two looms and received only $17 or $18 for the same number of hours. Within a few months, as speeding-up and stretching-out continued, the number of workers in the two mills was reduced from 5,700 to about 4,200.

Indeed, from the employees' point of view, things in the mills went rapidly from bad to worse. In January, 1930, the company posted a notice of a further 10-percent wage cut, when most of the workers already led an extremely meager existence. Accordingly, late in January a committee of mill workers petitioned President William Green of the A. F. of L. to send United Textile Workers' Union organizers to Danville. On February 9 the U. T. W. organizers from New York and New England staged their first rally in Danville. Over fifteen hundred mill workers, male and female, attended and two-thirds of them immediately joined the union. Throughout the spring and summer the union grew, and by September both the Riverside and the Dan River mills were organized practically 100 percent.

In May the company, unaccustomed as it was to fight the unions, acquired the services of a man by the name of West, an experienced labor fighter who had been manager of a carpet mill in Saxonville, Massachusetts, where he had defeated the United Textile Workers in a bitter labor dispute. Under his direction, the stretch-out system in both mills was improved so that some of the workers were made to operate as many as sixty-four looms fifty-five hours a week. Moreover, the employees were spied upon, and at the outset of the U. T. W.'s organization campaign those who joined the union were summarily discharged and thrown out of company-owned houses.

Finally, armed with the workers' grievances, the chief of which were the stretch-out, wage reductions and dismissal for union membership, the union leaders tried to see Fitzgerald. He refused to recognize the union or its representatives "under any circumstances," and would not admit them to his office. The workers, therefore, had no choice but to strike, which 95 percent of them voted to do on September 29.

Ever since then Mr. Fitzgerald has persisted in his refusal to meet the workers. It is generally understood in Danville that he believes they are a mob of ingrates. He regards himself as a good employer. He feels that he has always shown a deep personal interest in the welfare of his employees, as witness the magnificent Welfare Building and the Y. M. C. A. and the neat company houses which he built. He is convinced that the employees do not appreciate his benevolent attitude—so rare among mill owners—toward them. He believes that in these hard days in the textile industry he was justified in stretching out production and reducing wages. He feels that the workers do not realize, and have no sympathetic interest in, the difficulties that beset the cotton mills. But what he resents most of all is that the mill workers—Southern mill workers and Virginians—appealed to Northern labor leaders for aid.

There is also a personal, pathological factor which adds a note of drama to the situation and helps to explain Mr. Fitzgerald's dictatorial and unyielding attitude. Mr. Fitzgerald is not only deaf, but is troubled with a slight imperfection in his speech. He lives in a world of his own and is rather sensitive about meeting strangers. He keeps almost exclusively to his office, from which he issues his autocratic commands. Moreover, it is rumored

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in Danville that some time ago a labor man, who, however, had no connection with the U. T. W. or with the local organization, at an unofficial meeting publicly ridiculed Mr. Fitzgerald's imperfect speech. Mr. Fitzgerald was infuriated by this unfair attack upon him and ever since then his hatred of labor unions has been beyond reason and compromise.

The Danville strike has assumed almost national significance. The convention of the A. F. of L. at Boston endorsed the strike and started a movement to collect a huge strike fund; for the fate of labor unionism in the Southern textile industry hinges upon the outcome of the Danville fight. Several labor leaders admitted to me that if the United Textile Workers suffer a defeat in Danville, all their past and present efforts in the South to improve the living conditions of these workers would be completely vitiated.

Hence, everything possible is being done to win the strike. The United Textile Workers of America drew $30,000 from their treasury, which they could ill afford to do because over 60 percent of their members are unemployed, and sent it to Danville, where many families are on the verge of starvation.

However, the strike is unlikely to be broken—at least not for many months. The company has obtained an injunction against the strikers' interference with its employing non-union labor, but the injunction is not enforced as it would be in the average Northern industrial center. The local police and militia and private guards are scattered around the mills, but they in no way interfere with the strikers who, several hundred strong, picket the mills night and day.

The strike committee is preaching "peaceful picketing," but should the company commence to bring in "scabs" in great numbers, no one knows what might happen. The Danville strikers are not the meek, half-beaten, overworked foreigners that one saw a few years ago in the New Bedford and Fall River textile strikes. They are proud Virginians who do not allow themselves to be ordered about by police or soldiers or private gunmen. Many of them carry guns, while others have weapons at home.

The five hundred scabs do not yet endanger their cause, and so they let them be. "But I don't know how long the strikers will keep this temper," one of the labor leaders said to me. "I don't know how long we can feed them. If they should get hungry—well, a hungry man or woman is not responsible." Few union officials, both in Danville and in New York, which is the national headquarters of the U. T. W., failed to admit to me that they were worried as to what might happen should there be a riot in Danville.

The main issue on which the strike now hinges is the recognition of the union. Wage cuts and the stretch-out system are temporarily forgotten. "We want Mr. Fitzgerald to recognize our union," a striker said to me in front of the Dan River Mills, "and talk about the differences between him and us with our duly elected representatives. Yes, sir, that's our idea of industrial democracy. We don't believe we are unreasonable and Mr. Fitzgerald shouldn't be unreasonable either. They are his mills, but we are looking out for ourselves. We have children, sir. We have our rights as human beings, as citizens of Danville, Virginia."

And when, on returning to New York, I called on President Thomas F. McMahon of the United Textile Workers of America, he remarked: "We won't lose. Those people down in Danville will hold out all winter. Yes, I'm terribly afraid violence will break out, but we will not be responsible. If it breaks out, it'll break out in spite of everything that we could do. We offered calmly to talk things over with the management. We are ready any day that Mr. Fitzgerald wishes to start negotiations."

LOUIS ADAMIC.

Washington Notes

The Gesture of Coöperation—Eyes on the White House—Hostility toward Hoover—The McNinch Appointment.

WITH Mr. Hoover's assault on senatorial recklessness in relief appropriations, the last pretense of the much talked of "harmony" and "coöperation," so proudly proclaimed in that noble statement of the seven Democratic leaders right after the election, has disappeared. Inasmuch as the whole business was nothing but pretense anyway, the situation remains unchanged. It was, in fact, a publicity gesture made for political purposes, and no one, I think, seriously believed it was anything else—that is, no one except possibly Mr. Hoover himself, whose innocence in politics is only equaled by his ineptitude. The White House statement accusing Senators of "playing politics at the expense of human misery" was seized upon by the Democrats as justifying the scrapping of the "coöperation" idea, and from now on there will be little heard of it. So far as the rank and file of the Democrats are concerned, there never was a more unpopular proposal, and if Hoover's "attack on the Senate," sound though it was, had not furnished the excuse, something else would have. As things stand now, the natural lines are drawn clearly again and the game of presidential politics is being played in the same old way.

Naturally you expect the presidential politics of a congressional session to be much more intense after the mid-term elections than before. There are now not quite eighteen months before the national conventions, when candidates will be nominated and platforms adopted. For this reason every move made by either side has the presidential campaign in view. This was true of the "coöperation" statement and its repudiation. Never at any time from now on will the gentlemen who appear on the political stage in Washington lose sight of the presidential campaign.

This is always true of the months following the off-year election. But this time two elements make this ordinarily

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routine situation seem more interesting and colorful. One is the extraordinary series of victories which the minority party achieved in November. Though these victories may not give the Democrats control of the next Congress, they certainly deprive the Republican party of any semblance of real control and leave the administration without hope of a working and dependable majority in either branch. Furthermore, it is the sort of victory that inspires the minority party with a justified notion of capturing the presidency in the next general election.

The second element is the growth of personal hostility toward Mr. Hoover. No one who circulates much around Washington can doubt that this feeling has intensified and increased since the adjournment of Congress last July. With the exception of Roosevelt and Wilson, there has been no President in the White House during the last fifty years who has aroused such bitter personal feeling in the Senate as Mr. Hoover, though in every personal way he is curiously unlike either Roosevelt or Wilson. It was, of course, impossible to work up any degree of personal fury against so inert a little man as Mr. Coolidge, while Harding, though not respected, was personally liked by most of his former colleagues in the Senate. Also he was a politician and a party man. There was that bond between both him and Mr. Coolidge and other party men and politicians. They were all of the same tribe.

Perhaps a considerable part of the personal hostility toward Mr. Hoover is due to the fact that he does not belong to the tribe, never did and never will. And the more he tries to establish kinship, the clearer it becomes that he is a rank outsider who has simply muscled in. Aside from this more or less "fundamental fact," however, the character of Mr. Hoover's campaign before his election and his course in various matters since his election have heavily contributed to his unpopularity in the Senate. There is neither space nor time here to recite the details, and it is unnecessary to bother with more than one—and that the latest—as an illustration. The case I refer to is the appointment of Frank R. McNinch of North Carolina as a member of the Federal Power Commission.

It does seem clear that the appointment of McNinch lacks an adequate excuse. What Mr. Hoover did was to go into a Southern state, which he had carried in 1928, and pick for a position on a vitally important federal commission the former Democrat who had led his fight, handled the money used in the Republican North Carolina campaign and who, next to Senator Simmons, had done more than anyone else to turn over the state. Perhaps if Mr. McNinch were an outstanding man of recognized and conceded qualifications for this post, the political aspect of Mr. Hoover's action in choosing him might not seem so offensive. Mr. McNinch, however, is not an outstanding individual whose capacity is unquestioned. It is actually rumored that he has not legally accounted for the funds expended in the 1928 fight and that some of the funds used for Mr. Hoover came from power people in the state.

Of course to the Democrats—except Senators Simmons and Heflin—the selection of Mr. McNinch seems a clear reward of treachery. Such an appointment naturally compels a coalition between Democrats and progressive Republicans. There is nothing left for them to do except to fight the confirmation of such a man, and they certainly will. Moreover, unless I am greatly misled, Mr. McNinch stands an excellent chance of being rejected. By the time this piece is printed he may have been, but whether he is or not, it is certain that, when the Senate gets through with him, he will be a badly battered article. Mr. Hoover had the entire country to choose from, and why he should have picked a man who had a fine chance of being rejected, and who was certain of being made a target for bitterness and bad feeling, is difficult for even his friends to explain.

Personally I have heard no adequate explanation and shall rejoice if the Senate rejects Mr. McNinch. His appointment not only seems to me purely political, but an example of the worst and most stupid kind of politics. If there were space, I could cite others equally inept, but this latest exhibition of rotten political judgment seems enough to prove my point—that while there undoubtedly is a basic feeling among politicians against Mr. Hoover because he does not belong to the tribe, he contributes not a little to this hostility by his pathetic efforts to join. It does seem there should be someone in the White House circle of intimates with sense enough to save him from this sort of thing. What are the allegedly astute Mr. Lucas or the politically wise General Brown for, if not just this?

Washington. T. R. B.

Revue and Revolution

Overture, by William Bolitho. Longacre Theater, December 6, 1930.

The New Yorkers, by Herbert Fields, based on a story by Ray Goetz and Peter Arno. Music and lyrics by Cole Porter. Broadway Theater, December 8, 1930.

THE DEATH of William Bolitho last year doubtless prevented some of the finish that he might have given to his play. But in the main, "Overture" may represent very well what the final form of it would have been. The story turns on a minor revolution in a German town. The government has announced a law for a twelve-hour day in the mines and the workmen revolt against it and take the matter to the town council. The business of that council, according to government instructions, is to bring the matter to a head, get a number of leaders shot, and so point a lesson for the country at large. Ritter, a former officer in the army and a scion of a good family, is leading the workmen's revolt. He loves a girl and together they stand firm until, at the very last, with the army's aid the revolt is crushed. The girl, frantic from having been forced to see the death of the six policemen who are shot, betrays the address of one of the leaders in the revolt and is led away to be forcibly set free. The hero is thus left alone to go to his death.

Readers of Bolitho's essays and of his book, "Twelve Against the Gods," may well have been curious as to the outcome of his play. As a whole it contained a number of exalted motives and ideas—mostly about life, love, death, morals, the struggles of individuals entangled in systems and social forces. All this aimed high and represented the kind of matter that our theater needs, if its content is to be increased and its plane raised to some degree of importance. There was, furthermore, one good curtain: that

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where Ritter meets again, among the officers taking charge of the condemned, a onetime fellow officer and friend. The purity of motive—one of the main themes created in this leading figure—is never more clear than in this scene, when Ritter's quality is thus recognized by the others. There is an excellent portrait of the commanding officer, very finely and subtly conceived; there is a love scene, confused but not without its pathos and poetry; and the end of the play has a certain dignity of feeling. Otherwise, "Overture" seems to me unrealized creatively, or at least faint and blurred. It is hard to give one's attention to this revolution that has no reality of any kind. We hear the council meeting, care nothing about it, and never believe that anything is happening beyond a certain arrangement and display of individuals, very few of whom seem particularly real and none of whom takes any profound hold on us. As the play is produced at the Longacre, there is, to be frank, no moment that etches itself on our emotions and no character that goes much farther than his remarks in behalf of the author's theme. It is the kind of play you remember nobly but often watch with boredom.

To come down to fundamentals with regard to "Overture," the cardinal limitation or defect of the whole play appears in the very first moments of the opening scene. This limitation turns on that point, so bewildering to many, that is illustrated in "Mother Goose" and that makes "Mother Goose" so much better poetry than such worthies as Longfellow, for example: I mean the ear. When we come to literature, we detect very quickly, if we hear well, what is alive and what is not. The same with the theater. It is astonishing to listen to the lines of "Overture" and to observe how quickly they fail one's listening capacity. In the most exciting places, the crises of decision or suspense, the same beat goes on, the words are, as the hero says of some plan, "feasible," but they are not infectious, they are not dramatic in that subtle necessity that the stage requires, and they rarely catch us up with them except when they pass away from the stage itself and away from the dramatic moment into that intensity and thirst for what is subtle and high that Bolitho at his best exhibited.

In general, however, the play, like many passages in the essays, is far more complicated than subtle in its motive and expression, and the way in which it lags is not due so much to any greatness as to the untheatricality of its medium.

Nobody in the cast seemed to me less convincing than Mr. Colin Clive, who created Captain Stanhope in the London "Journey's End" and in the moving-picture version made at Hollywood, and has now become the hero in "Overture." In this new role he is for the most part only an agreeable Englishman. His excellence consists in a certain lack of bad taste in the rendering of his scenes and a certain willingness to be sincere. His defect lies in the monotony of his method. In the beginning of the second act, when the infantry has come and the revolt is crushed, the cause hopeless, Mr. Clive and the heroine enter, and from their manner, voices, movement, emotional radiation and mood, you would know nothing; they might be entering for the first time, and somewhat casually at that. The fundamental limitation here is a lack of continuity—everything is merely a moment in itself—and an absence of all bodily dance, as it were—the whole art of acting is based on physical and emotional rhythm. This well bred sterility means diverse things to diverse people. For those who think the English very restrained, it will mean a silent monument to vast implications. For those who think them full of sentiment, inner commotion and subjective subdivisions, these hidden fires will call for more concentrated expression, not outer commotion necessarily, but at least something more than a mere delicious lack of all demonstration. There is a way, if you are an artist, of creating the deepest feelings, however marked the stolidity, repression or torpidity of the external man may be. It is a fact worth noting that this celebrated reserve of the English has become a sort of stock motive, dramatized, cheapened by popular expectations, pretty much as the gay, mandolin-playing Neapolitan is a stage version of the citizens of that subtly cynical, animal and philosophic city. A pessimistic way of saying this last point is to say that the theater likes rot and nonsense, but a better way is to say that the theater likes type and standard characterization. We will let it go at that. Those who think Mr. Clive a fine actor undoubtedly derive pleasure from the thought. Certainly he feels things about the play, or at least about himself, that have their own kind of honesty.

"The New Yorkers," that long expected, lavishly cast and much publicitied revue, began, it seems, very late on the first night, enjoyed an intermission of immense duration, and ended finally by running so long that the critics on the daily papers were unable to see most of its latter part. They wrote accordingly with more flags and banners perhaps than the evening as a whole, had they seen it, might have won. At any rate, the second of the two acts is often very dull, not to say flat, with much too much of the Durantes and too little of Miss Hope Williams, and with a muddled effect at the very last that lets all the wind out of the story itself.

The first act, however, goes over with a breeze and variety, a smartness and prodigality, that carries all before it, and is, as things go, a triumph. Sitting in the midst of an audience that is on tiptoe with expectation as to who will enter next, that talks aloud as if we were all at a circus, that laughs so often and marvels so much, and is so happy generally, we are obliged to tell ourselves that it's no wonder they prefer this to a half-baked piece of pathos or a drab pseudo-profundity about a crude young lady, or a more or less vulgar and limited though bright little comedy. Here are Mr. Cole Porter's lyrics and music, heartily admired if not unforgettable, here are quick ventures in humors and tricks, here is nothing excessively anything except excessive. Pleasure and change and noise fill the house, and if the story limps along through stage drinking, dancing, mammas, girls and romance, it is at least as unexacting as stories usually are in these musical affairs. Mr. Peter Arno's brilliant gifts emerge here and there, as designer and satirist. Mr. Jimmie Durante, with his less engaging companions, takes up a great deal of the time and was never better; he seemed to me wiser and much funnier than I have ever seen him. Miss Frances Williams has her usual competence and style. Miss Hope Williams brings to the play a unique quality that puts a shine, charm and freshness on the whole occasion. Her Bacchic dance with the Durantes is a perfect thing.

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To be ponderous about such an entertainment, taking yourself seriously as critic, would be to show yourself as much without humor as you would be to sit through it to the very end. But you may at least note that an interesting thing sociologically about this new revue is the aptness of its title. The revue expresses exactly a certain aspect of New York that is coming more and more to the front. I often wonder if hearts far off in the provinces, seeing the continual pictures of night life, cocktails, fat and lean careless ladies, top-hatted men and adolescent cynicism, and hearing forever of the sweep and style in these Manhattan regions, do not conjure up for themselves a heaven of heavens toward which their hearts grow hungry. They think of the speakeasies, the first nights, the French Riviera, Paris and the Lido, and aspire. All of which is redolent in "The New Yorkers." For those who think this list of costly names, familiar figures in the press and up and down the stage—these scores of stars, as they are called—is thrilling, or who thrill with that procession of expensive entrances—for which as a rule so little to do next has been provided—or who twitter at those clothes whose cost is known and whose beauty lies mostly in their vogue, "The New Yorkers" is a miraculous event, whirling one along the track of the latest, sweet with the vague snobbishness of being in the know. But it is possible, without thinking that any of these people or matters on the stage are, with two or three exceptions, of the slightest importance at all, to find the evening, or the first half of it at least, a capital affair, smart, bright, up-to-date, significant, young, jaded and expert. STARK YOUNG.

A COMMUNICATION

Robots or Men?

SIR: I liked Edmund Wilson's review of Dubreuil's "Robots or Men?" in The New Republic of October 29, and I agree quite thoroughly with Mr. Wilson in his judgment of the book. On the whole, M. Dubreuil's effort is the best both in style and substance that I have ever noted in this particular field. However, certain addenda (some of fact, some of opinion) might profitably be made to the picture presented by the extremely intelligent French workman.

M. Dubreuil's idea of the introduction of the five-day week at the Ford plants seems to me not quite an accurate one. He gives the impression that this innovation was the result of meditation above the mêlée. There were, however, circumstances surrounding it which indicate a considerable factor of expediency:

1. It took place in a year of falling production and rising sales resistance—1926.

2. It represented a temporary economy of considerable duration (readjustment was carried out slowly and perhaps never was completed under the old day rate) and, on a basis of the minimum wage, even a permanent economy (six days at $6 per day being $1 more per week than five days at $7 per day).

3. It lopped from the working week the least productive day (I believe that efficiency peaks on Wednesday and falls thereafter) so that if six days are worked under the five-day plan, with rest days staggered, the Saturday force has Friday energy to spend. In other words, the five-day week eliminated the low from the production graph.

M. Dubreuil rejects the idea that Ford investigators call at workers' homes, but does not mention the fact that at one time such investigators *did* call. It is my impression that the duration of this plan coincided with that period when the Ford worker was rightly regarded as a peculiarly fortunate fellow, and that its discontinuance came at about the time when wages in other plants had been forced to somewhere near the Ford level because of the necessity for competing with Ford for good labor.

M. Dubreuil sees our great natural resources and efficient organization and equipment as the basis of low-priced motor cars. I think he omits the very important factor of a practically tariffless territory containing more than a hundred million people, a good share of them in fair circumstances—in comparison with India's hundreds of millions, at least. Here is a potential market unduplicated in any other part of the world. Only this vast domestic market, I think, warranted the development and concentration of the multiple-purpose machines, the intensive pursuit of improved and automatic methods where the increased economy per unit is small, the continual experiment in system and organization which characterize the automotive industry at its best. Without this market the United States would be no competitor in the world market, as far as the motor car is concerned. With it, the American automotive industry has built production centers with which no foreign country can compete on anything like an equal basis, even on its own soil. Embargo is practically the only barrier that can succeed against the American motor car.

M. Dubreuil's notes on prohibition are nonsense, of course. Especially, I should say, with respect to Detroit. I used to buy Hennessey's Three Star there at a confectionery store, $7 per; Walker's Rye was $4.50. I could hit a dozen speakeasies and three distilleries from our back porch any time I felt like throwing stones. I have seen quarter-barrels of beer being rolled into one of the largest and most popular churches in Detroit for a Sunday afternoon's entertainment. A chap for whom I am often mistaken—he drinks something like me—in fact helped roll them, and later on strained manfully at the pumps.

M. Dubreuil holds a democratic background responsible for the ease of contact between bosses and workers. I suspect that this feature of our best industries is subject to a far different interpretation. The idea behind keeping the superintendent in the midst of men and machines is to keep him conscious of the fact that he is an employee. That is good Ford philosophy, and personally I am all for it. I used to appreciate it particularly when, as a unit in the tool-supply personnel, I had to hasten to a tool room after cutters to keep a job from going down. Almost invariably the superintendent would take me on a personally conducted tour until we reached the machine where they were being finished, and he would see that some of them *were* finished, too, without delay.

M. Dubreuil sees in the Ford industries an advance toward socialistic enterprise. I don't. But I see a freshness of attitude and a freedom from mass and traditional fears

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which are heartening. Mr. Ford never has shown the slightest fear of the Red Terror, so far as I know, either in his plants or out of them. He was dealing on a large scale with the U. S. S. R. years before the General Motors Corporation dared to sniff timidly in that direction. Beyond a doubt many Reds earn their bread in his plants; the company cares not a damn for their opinion as long as they keep pace. In 1926 there were already 25,000 Fordson tractors in Soviet service, and bearded young Communists with their shirts out were learning how to make them at the Rouge and how to run them at Dearborn. Ford engineers are coöperating with the Soviets on a large plant at Nizhni Novgorod. Already they have helped them on plants at, I think, Rostov and Stalingrad. Ford service engineers have toured the Soviet Union surveying the facilities for overhaul and repair and giving lectures and suggestions for improving maintenance. Regardless of the degree or lastingness of Mr. Ford's fame, as collaborator Crowther has tried to propagate it, I believe that he will go down in history as one of the chief builders of the Communist Commonwealth. And by the way, that makes the Soviet Union almost a Detroit creation, for it was in Detroit that Daniel De Leon conceived the idea of industrial (as opposed to geographical) representation, which has been adopted as a basic parliamentary pattern by the U. S. S. R.

New York City. MURRAY GODWIN.

CORRESPONDENCE

League-Sponsored Loans

SIR: May I be permitted to reply to the comment which you were kind enough to make in The New Republic of November 19, in reference to my analysis of the status of foreign loans sponsored by the League of Nations.

You appear to be at a loss to know what an average appreciation of $99.68 per $1,000 bond shows, "on account of the fact that the appreciation mentioned is an average."

The purpose of my study was to ascertain the extent to which the average investor has been rewarded for his faith in the League. In other words, if the average investor had bought one bond of every issue sold under the auspices of the League, his net profit to date would be approximately 10 percent, exclusive of the very liberal return on his investment in the meantime. The fact that some of the so-called League loans declined in price is really irrelevant, because my study assumes that the investor has purchased the entire list.

If you are unwilling to interpret findings merely because "averages" are resorted to, you may find it difficult unqualifiedly to subscribe to conclusions reached by the author of an article on foreign bonds published in the same issue. Mr. Dennis, to whom I refer, concludes, for example, that foreign bonds have declined as much as 10 percent. Would not Mr. Dennis's "discovery" also have to be taken "with a grain of salt," because it, too, is based on averages? While many of the issues included in Mr. Dennis's list show pronounced paper declines, there are quite a few which show appreciation in value as compared with cost.

New York City. MAX WINKLER.

War Guilt and War Guilt Prejudice

SIR: The assessment of responsibility for the World War is manifestly important. Consequently a magazine such as The New Republic should be extremely careful to obtain a clear-headed discussion of the matter. In the Fall Literary Section H. E. Barnes was selected to review Schmitt's "The Coming of the War: 1914." You know or should know that Schmitt and Barnes have participated for several years in an acrimonious dispute over war guilt, which has become, on Professor Barnes's side, increasingly personal. . . . You would have served your readers better had you chosen as reviewer a man who could view the book with less emotional bias.

Judging by his contributions to Current History, by his own book and by the occasional stories that have appeared in German publications, it would be fair to class Professor Barnes with the pro-Germans and dismiss him with a sniff.

Professor Shotwell is generally recognized as one of our scholars, while Professor Barnes's writings have frequently assumed the character of special pleadings. The former says of Schmitt's book: "An epochal and authoritative study. The tone of authority is kept throughout . . . by careful detailed analysis of every scrap of evidence available." Barnes says: "In using official documents Professor Schmitt selects the particular collection which best suits his purposes." Elsewhere Barnes says: "As editor of The Journal of Modern History, Professor Schmitt has excluded source material of the highest importance from its columns when detrimental to the Entente legend." Whom shall we believe?

These are serious attacks on Schmitt's professional integrity. I doubt that Barnes can substantiate them. As a member of a department of History whose excellence is unquestioned, it is extremely unlikely that Schmitt is guilty of anything more serious than publishing views differing from those of Dr. Barnes.

Evanston, Ill. J. D. HASTINGS.

The Vices of Short Selling

SIR: I am a great admirer of The New Republic, but I cannot agree with an article, "The Unpatriotic Bear," which appeared in your issue for October 22. The writer apparently loses sight of a fact which so many other people have overlooked in short selling, i. e., that there are millions of people who have invested billions of their savings in securities, the value of which is being destroyed by short selling. If everyone who invested in securities did so merely for speculation and not for legitimate investment, then your conclusions would be correct. But there are millions of citizens who are looking for legitimate investment and are not attempting to speculate or gamble, and it is the investments of these people which are being placed in jeopardy by short selling. They have owned their stock for years.

You are entirely correct in saying that "bull" movements raise and "bear" movements lower market prices of securities without regard to their actual value. Let us assume that a legitimate investor desires to liquidate his holdings. In the case of a bull movement he is not compelled to liquidate at a loss, but in the case of a bear movement and the consequent depression in values caused by short selling, he is forced to take a loss. It is unfair to expose the invested savings of millions of our citizens to this menace.

It has been amply demonstrated that a powerful group of avaricious speculators can by short selling arbitrarily destroy the values of the property of others. In securities, as in almost everything else, it is far easier to destroy confidence and value than to build it and for this reason, short selling is particularly successful and dangerous in times of depression. Anything which destroys confidence and values can only aggravate our present serious condition. If the board of governors of the New York Stock Exchange haven't sense enough to see this and at least suspend short selling until the country comes back to normal, the American people will take a large grain of salt with their loudly proclaimed statements of what these gentlemen are doing and propose to do to relieve the unemployment and suffering of millions of our citizens. I believe short selling will be prohibited by law eventually. Mussolini of Italy and Tardieu of France have both denounced market manipulations and definitely curtail them.

Atlantic City, N. J. ANSLEY H. FOX.

[No doubt there would be more stability in investment values if a better instrumentality of purchase and sale than the speculative market could be devised. But it is unsound, in our opinion, to attempt to prevent either selling short or buying on a margin so long as speculation is tolerated. Certainly we could not prohibit one while permitting the other.—THE EDITORS.]

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The Great Man

Daniel Webster, by Claude Moore Fuess. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 2 vols. 863 pages. $10.

The Godlike Daniel, by Samuel Hopkins Adams. New York: J. H. Sears and Company. 426 pages. $5.

RARELY does biography succeed in giving so perfectly the effect intended as in the case of the lives of Daniel Webster by Mr. Fuess and Mr. Adams. To Mr. Fuess, Webster is a great man, great in character and action, in service to his country, in his effect upon his fellow men; great in his humanity, as attested even by his inconsistencies and weaknesses, for "his vices were never mean or low, and perhaps his very frailties make us love him more." This attitude implies a faith in the possibility of greatness. As its basis Mr. Fuess believes in human nature, and in history as the record of what great men have wrought in the world. Mr. Adams finds human nature abundantly interesting, and political history entertaining, but he does not take either too seriously. The two biographers agree, broadly speaking, as to the facts. They differ in emphasis. Mr. Adams pictures Webster from year to year, in his splendor and his decay. He shows him eating and drinking too much, careless about debts, and taking money from interests which he served, pushing appropriation bills in Congress for the benefit of clients whose claims he was handling on commission, working for the United States Bank, from which he borrowed more often than he paid. Mr. Fuess narrates the great achievements of Webster, conscientiously calling attention in footnotes to lapses from higher standards of conduct, and sums up the case against him in a chapter devoted to the Devil's Advocate, who makes little headway against the accumulated force of the narrative.

The fundamental element in Webster's greatness was in the concentration of human qualities which we call personality. It was on his personality that the board of examiners admitted him to Dartmouth College. His exhibition of human force carried the Senate and the Supreme Court with him in an interpretation of the Constitution which was of doubtful validity. The same magnificent spectacle drew men to him and held them spellbound, whether in an intimate group about the dinner table or in tens of thousands about the rostrum on Bunker Hill. Oratory was unquestionably the form of expression in which America of the middle nineteenth century excelled. In fiction, poetry, painting and music the country had little to show to the world, but the tradition of political and pulpit eloquence had been inherited from the English parliamentary and ecclesiastical struggles of the seventeenth century, and it cannot be said that the United States fell behind its models. It was part of the astuteness with which Webster conducted his life in large ways, so different from his carelessness in details, that he chose law as his profession, with its easy introduction to political oratory.

Webster's personality found a great cause to serve in the American Union. Mr. Fuess relates the engaging story of his boyish purchase of a cotton handkerchief on which was printed the recently adopted Constitution of the United States. To Webster, telling this anecdote sixty years afterwards, it was true in its symbolism, if not in fact; but his attitude toward the Constitution was, like that toward the tariff, subject to revision. Mr. Adams notes that in 1813 he argued that Congress had no power to call out the militia of the states in the war with Great Britain, and declared that it was "the solemn duty of the states' government to protect their authority over their own militia and to interfere between their citizens and arbitrary power," and adds the comment: "Transplanted to 1917 that utterance would be labeled treason." But the change is itself evidence of the greatness of Webster's accomplishment. It is not too much to say that by his argument before the Supreme Court and his reply to Hayne he put teeth into the Constitution, and founded the nation anew in national consciousness. When Webster came in his old age to defend the compromise of 1850, his March Seventh speech was naturally regarded by the Abolitionists as moral apostasy, but it was political truth. For those who, like Lincoln, placed the Union above the abolition of slavery it was a complete apologia. At all events Mr. Fuess is not alone in asserting that Webster prevented secession in 1850, when it would almost certainly have succeeded. If it is argued that Webster was influenced by the hope of obtaining Southern support for the presidency in 1852, it may be replied that much as Webster wanted the office as a crown of personal glory, he wanted it as much or more as a means of rehabilitating the executive, fallen into the hands of mediocre availability, and making it again the bulwark of the Union which it had been in Jackson's administration. There was more than personal chagrin in his exclamation on learning of Scott's nomination: "How will this look in history?"

Evidence of Webster's greatness is legitimately found in the impression which he produced on his fellows. Wherever he went, West or South, crowds gathered to welcome him, to hear his voice, or merely to see him pass. To men of such distinction as Edward Everett, Robert C. Winthrop and Rufus Choate in the North and Alexander H. Stephens in the South he was a supreme guide and example. Stephens was one of 100,000 to vote for him for President on the Tuesday after his funeral. His return to Boston after each session of Congress was almost invariably the occasion of a public meeting in Faneuil Hall. Emerson who said of Webster, after the Seventh of March speech, the bitterest thing he ever said of anyone, shows by frequent entries in his diary his preoccupation with the great man. "Webster's force," he wrote, "is part of nature and the world, like any given amount of azote or electricity." And on Webster's death he set it down that "Nature had not in our days, or not since Napoleon, cut out such a masterpiece." Finally, in witness of Webster's enduring place in the hearts of his countrymen Mr. Fuess notes that in the first election to the Hall of Fame, next to ninety-seven ballots for Washington, Webster and Lincoln were tied for second place with ninety-six, a recognition of the three men to whom we as a nation owe most.

Undoubtedly the acceptance of Webster's greatness by his contemporaries was due in part to his own consciousness of it, and his skill in imposing his conception of himself on others. Mr. Fuess and Mr. Adams agree that Webster was a superb actor. He had the physique and the mask. Carlyle has given a memorable portrait of him:

> The tanned complexion; that amorphous crag-like face; the dull black eyes under the precipice of brows, like dull anthracite furnaces needing only to be *blown;* the mastiff mouth accurately closed; I have not traced so much of *silent Berserker's rage* that I remember of in any other man.

Even as a poor boy at Dartmouth he had a passion for clothes. For great oratorical occasions he always dressed in a bright blue coat with brass buttons, and a buff waistcoat. There is more than a suspicion that he stage managed his entrances and exits. Mr. Fuess quotes a Dart-

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mouth graduate who remarked that "in the political processions of his youth, he never saw Webster except marching alone in a hollow square, and that without any planning on the part of the authorities in charge." Like other actors he needed his audience. While Emerson communed with the infinite through his diary, Webster thought of himself in terms of public appearance. Fletcher Webster was fishing one day with his father, when he heard from behind the trees words not addressed to the trout: "Venerable men, you have come down to us from a former generation." Webster directed his deathbed scene with a formality such as attends the passing of a cardinal or pope. After his dying oration he lapsed into drowsiness, but revived to inquire, "Have I—wife, son, doctors, friends, are you all here?—have I, on this occasion, said anything unworthy of Daniel Webster?" Later he murmured "poetry," whereupon his son recited his favorite lines from Gray's "Elegy"—a great poem of commonplaces as Webster's greatness was an expansion of the commonplace. "Even in our ashes live their wonted fires." If he was not so profoundly human as Emerson, he behaved more like a human being, to whom it is no part of human nature to be dead.

Bothe these biographies attest the fact that Webster was an extraordinary individual. Their difference lies in that Mr. Fuess believes in greatness, while Mr. Adams does not. Mr. Fuess writes at full length with the dignity and circumspection of the historian. Mr. Adams is terse and pithy, with the picturesqueness and vivacity of the journalist. Like the painters Healy and Ames, who commemorated the great scenes of Webster's career, his reply to Hayne and his death, Mr. Adams is not always accurate in his selection of details. Henry Clay was not in the Speaker's chair on the date (1825-27) of Mr. Adams' lively picture of "The Congressman's Busy Day," any more than Rufus Choate was at the deathbed; but both Clay and Choate are good copy. It may be added that Congressman Webster could scarcely have worried at that time about expenses of the Marshfield estate, which he did not own until 1832. These excursions into Webster's mind, like the painting of the contemporary scene, are part of Mr. Adams' method as a journalist. Mr. Fuess never takes a chance with fiction. He is a historian.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Myths of the World

Orpheus: Myths of the World, by Padraic Colum. New York: The Macmillan Company. 327 pages. $5.

Old Pastures, by Padraic Colum. New York: The Macmillan Company. 42 pages. $1.50.

ALTHOUGH our attitude towards "the savage" is less idealistic than that of our great-grandfathers when they turned from Pope to Ossian, yet in reading through Mr. Colum's collection of myths one is led to admire anew, sometimes the audacity, sometimes the extreme delicacy of the primitive imagination. One is especially struck by the fact that in nearly all the great myths the boldest fancies are controlled by that in the primitive mind which tends to cast its creations into strict forms. This quality is now generally admired in early paintings and sculptures, but the formal beauty of the myths has escaped us, perhaps because they have not survived in their original versions. But even in modern dress they retain the stamp of that formalizing mind which constructed them, for the reason that in them, as in the best mature art, form is not a mere property of style, but a basic quality, apparent in the very disposition of characters and arrangement of events.

An example is that Babylonian tale of how Ishtar, goddess of fruitfulness, went down into the underworld after her dead lover Tammuz; how at each of the seven gates she was challenged and deprived of a piece of her clothing, until finally she stood naked before the goddess of the underworld. In this tale the characters are in formal alignment—those who represent Death are opposed to those who represent Life—and the parts of the narrative are related to one another like the elements of a design.

Not all the stories in Mr. Colum's collection have quite the absolute symmetry of this one, for not all of them are, strictly speaking, myths. A few evidently belong to the literature of romance, with its interminable journeys, its magic transformations, and romance is inclined to be rather amorphous. But the selection is a good one in another sense, for all the stories are interesting. They include examples from the Polynesians, the Mexicans and the Zuñi Indians, as well as from the better known peoples of Europe and Asia; evidently Mr. Colum felt the outlining or anthologizing impulse. I might add that "Orpheus" is not a children's book—though it is, for parents and teachers, a valuable source of stories to retell to children.

The book opens with a learned introduction, which I found rather confused and dispirited. There are far too many quotations from authoritative works; the quoted passages are not well mortised to Mr. Colum's own remarks; and some of them merely offer commonplaces for which one need scarcely lean upon authority. The introduction is obviously too short for what it tries to tell. Perhaps no one but a veteran encyclopedist could hope to characterize the mythologies and religions of some seventeen peoples in so short a space as twenty pages.

We are told that Mr. Colum, in retelling these myths of the world, has tried to adjust his manner to the spirit of the various peoples represented. I was, however, unable to detect much variation in his writing. Perhaps it is just as well that he has not succeeded in what must almost certainly have been a piece of verbal legerdemain. In reality, Mr. Colum, like Hawthorne and other successful writers in this sphere, has made these legendary materials very much the property of his own style and fancy. Throughout the collection one is aware of a mind intent upon emphasizing the pictorial element of the myths. And the style attempts to simulate an unsophisticated and antique prose, through the use of simple constructions and concrete language. It is almost inevitable, I suppose, that something of the conventional once-upon-a-time manner should drift into Mr. Colum's style. Still I think that, had he omitted such obvious archaisms as the words "digged" and "builded," his writing would have been fresher and less literary.

Mr. Colum's handling of the narrative materials, and his selection of details (not an easy thing in such voluminous cycles as those of Apollo and Dionysos) is unusually creditable. The stories begin dramatically and proceed with ease and swiftness. And the inventions of his own imagination are often delightful—as, for example, this addition to the Greek myth of the flood: "Men in their boats drew fishes out of the tops of elm trees, and the water nymphs were amazed to come on men's cities under the waves."

The interest in the lore and legends of the past which led Mr. Colum to write "Orpheus" is also apparent in the new volume of his poems, "Old Pastures," where a large

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number of the pieces are translations or adaptations from traditional songs in other languages, and the rest suggest the cadence and jaunty spirit of ballads and folk songs. They are almost entirely poems of fancy, sentiment and humor, of a type made familiar to us by the poets of the Irish renaissance, to which movement Mr. Colum in part belongs. His subjects are nature, the past, the objects and occupations of provincial Ireland; in a few poems, as in one on the Atlantic fliers, he deals more directly with contemporary events. Unfortunately these poems are rather tired in accent and imagination; the images are too familiar; and they lack that incisive perfection of technique which is almost a requisite of good minor verse. With the exception of "The Bat" and "Dublin Roads," the poems in this volume are inferior to Mr. Colum's other poetry, and also to his prose version of the myths.

FREDERICK DUPEE.

Lawrence's Last Novel

The Virgin and the Gipsy, by D. H. Lawrence. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

THE STORY of "The Virgin and the Gipsy" is fully implied in the title—the virgin being the daughter of an English rector, and the gipsy a somewhat conventionalized figure, in Lawrence's terms, of the outcast, "who sneered at law-abiding men, and went his own way." There is no great subtlety in the treatment of this story, and the writing in detail is extremely awkward—so awkward, indeed, that one is not surprised to discover on the last page the publisher's statement that the book lacked the author's final revision.

Yvette, the rector's daughter, encounters the gipsy on the highway, and afterwards remembers him with "his big, bold eyes upon her, with the naked insinuation of desire in them. The absolutely naked insinuation of desire made her lie prone and powerless on the bed, as if a drug had cast her in a new, molten mold." This note is repeated frequently, to the point where it becomes somewhat absurd, to the point where it leads to sentences such as this: "Only she lay and wished she were a gipsy." She goes to him, and is at the point of surrendering herself, when there is an accidental interruption in the form of motorists who stop to warm themselves at the fire. In the final chapter, too, there is an unexpected flood, and the gipsy rescues Yvette; this melodramatic chapter, however, is the only one in which the writing rises above the level of formulized writing for more than an occasional passage. The quarrels in the rector's household; his mother's dominance of him and his sister's hatred of Yvette—the scenes that treat of these are effective, and in his portrait of the rector Lawrence succeeds, as he has always succeeded in his portraits of characters shown as being under the domination of some woman. But, even in these scenes, there is a strained effect. The characters never talk to each other, but always hiss, or sneer, or jeer; and the incongruity that one feels arises from a conviction that these stage directions are arbitrary—that they do not have their source in the emotion within the scenes, but are rather added in an effort to inject some more obviously dramatic emotion into them.

Perhaps because the book is badly written, the narrowness of Lawrence's talent seems more conspicuous; and even the struggle between the sexes that occupied him in all his books, and became so intense in "Sons and Lovers," is here diminished until it seems only an attitude, a habit of mind, a literary abstraction. In the end the continual gnashing of teeth, the numb, cold fears, the green rages which so frequently grip his characters, and which he attempts to analyze, appear as only devices intended to heighten a predetermined effect; for these emotions, violent as they are, raise no proportionate result in the actions or the speech of the characters who are most moved by them. One questions this continual torment, observing that the women in Lawrence's novels go to their lovers in some inexplicable anguish, or, more often, in his own phrase, "vaguely, as in a dream." Yvette moves through this novel in her vague and dreamlike state, but her words contradict her.

The reiteration of identifying adjectives, and the insistence on characters as types, illustrating the contrasting aspects of a theme—and of only one theme, of one problem—these indicate Lawrence's limitations in more than mere craftsmanship. "The Virgin and the Gipsy," with its hackneyed story, its hasty writing, is not so much an example as an exposé of Lawrence's method. It is unfortunate that a career which began with "Sons and Lovers" had to end with this book, for it seems that Lawrence deserved a better fate than to have it published.

ROBERT CANTWELL.

Storm Over Africa

Caliban in Africa: An Impression of Color Madness, by Leonard Barnes. London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd. 220 pages. $2.

THE "Caliban" of this moving, and in some ways terrifying, book is the soul of the "Africaner," by which the author means the white South African who has allowed his whole outlook upon life to be warped by the color problem. Africanerism, so conceived, is a spiritual disease the earliest seeds of which, historically speaking, can be traced to the traditional attitude of the Dutch settlers toward the native races. However, as Mr. Barnes rightly emphasizes, the British settlers, forgetting their own more liberal tradition, have been only too willing to allow themselves to be infected. It was a Dutch South African who said: "The dominant thing is not justice but preservation of white civilization. If we want to hold our own, we must exterminate the natives." It was a British South African, and an ex-minister of the Crown to boot, who said: "The white man is determined to do all he can to remain and, what is more, to rule. No ethical considerations, such as the rights of man, will be allowed to stand in the way."

The book, then, is the ruthless diagnosis of a mind "too unhappy to be kind"; too sick, in fact, not only for justice but even for intelligent self-interest. A higher civilization in contact with a lower best preserves itself by communicating itself in the most generous and thorough fashion, especially when the people of lower civilization are at once anxious to acquire the higher civilization and show no inherent incapacity for doing so. But the tragedy of the Africaner is that, for him, the preservation of white civilization means the preservation of his own supremacy—social, economic, political; and that he sees no other means of saving the latter except repressive legislation, backed in the last resort by machine guns, airplanes and poison gas.

He owns 87 percent of the land and, though the natives have confessedly not enough land for their needs,

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Africaner sentiment has blocked every attempt at a juster distribution. Unskilled whites are saved from becoming "poor whites" by being employed on the state railways and other public works at an uneconomic "civilized labor" wage which is about four times the wage rate of the natives they have displaced, though their efficiency is only about 15 percent above that of the natives. Skilled whites with a minimum wage rate of about eight times that of the natives, are entrenched behind "color bar" legislation which authorizes the government to close by proclamation any trade to natives and reserve it exclusively for whites. As a result, the natives who constitute the bulk of South Africa's population are, in the mass, so underpaid and so desperately poor that industrial development languishes for lack of an effective home market, and that for all its gold and diamond mines South Africa has one of the lowest national incomes per head of population. Add that only about 25 percent of all native children get any education at all, and that for the past three years the country has been debating ways and means of abolishing the old Cape native franchise, lest at some future date the white minority be outvoted by the black majority, and it is easy to understand that ever since the formation of the Union twenty-one years ago, native distrust, discontent, fear and disaffection have been steadily growing.

And so the Africaner is caught in a vicious circle from which he knows no escape. Every advance in civilization which the natives achieve makes them more formidable competitors and sows a fresh fear in the Africaner's mind. To protect himself, he builds new and higher barriers. But every barrier adds to the discontent of the natives, who see, one after the other, every avenue closed to their aspiration, and opportunities of earning wages on which they have come to rely, blocked. For it does not occur to the Africaner that when some thousands of natives have been discharged to make room for whites, the ejected can only swell the ranks of native unemployed. The policy is to save poor whites at the expense of poorer natives—and the devil take the hindmost. Thus, with growing native discontent grows once more Africaner fear, and with fresh fear are born fresh repressive measures.

Writing as a South African who has striven to work for better racial relations and the creation of an atmosphere less charged with panic and latent warfare, I wish I could confidently assert that Mr. Barnes is wrong when he declares that it is probably too late to save the Africaner from the whirlwind of violent native strife which he has sown and of which the harvest, according to Mr. Barnes, will ripen in two decades at most. I would add what he has not pointed out: that the natives' sense of racial solidarity against the whites is steadily growing, and that with each year the evidences multiply of the development of an aggressive racial consciousness among them. In the past, this development has been slow, not only because native grievances were not so acute and native hope and trust in the white man's good will still strong, but also because of surviving intertribal feuds, and above all because of the lack of a single medium of communication. But, just as Indian Nationalism has been enabled to spread as the English language became a *lingua franca* among the many-tongued peoples of India, so we must reckon with a similarly accelerated nationalism among the natives of South Africa.

On the problem of maintaining the Cape native franchise, and trying to extend it to the three northern provinces of the Union which are fiercely opposed to it, Mr. Barnes holds extremely interesting views. He thinks, probably rightly, that white sentiment will continue to harden against the admission of natives to the franchise on any terms which would bring the domination of a white minority by a black majority within the bounds of practical realization. Hence, to press such proposals, even on the highest ground of principle, seems to him the surest way to exacerbate race feeling and hasten the day of violent conflict. He suggests that parliamentary institutions cannot successfully be divorced from their European context, and that they are ill adapted to the settlement of questions so heavily charged with dangerous feelings as those of race. Instead of native representation in Parliament on the same terms as white representation, he proposes that all interracial questions be handed over to a "Court of Interracial Justice," composed of experts whose impartiality and high qualifications would enable their decisions "by the sheer logic of their fitness to the facts to quench factious opposition into tacit acquiescence." Mr. Barnes does not think that the suggestion will ever be accepted in South Africa. But he appears to hope that its adoption may save Kenya and other northern colonies from repeating the same tragic mistakes.

As for South Africa itself, he not only gives up hope of a sane and wise solution, but makes the bold proposal that, inasmuch as the whole drift of present-day native policy in that country is subversive of all the principles and ideals to which the British Crown had pledged itself during the nineteenth century, and for the upholding of which the natives look to the Crown, the British Commonwealth of Nations should, after trying a concerted and probably unavailing protest, expel the Union from membership.

With the substance of Mr. Barnes's analysis it is hard to disagree, though his statement of his views is at times overcolored. The situation is certainly extremely grave in its possibilities of future disaster. My own hope is that Mr. Barnes has despaired too soon of the Africaner. At any rate, he hardly gives due weight to the evidences of a counter-current in public opinion which may yet save South Africa from the worst. There is notably the rapid spread in the last two or three years of the movement for the formation of joint councils of Europeans and natives, on the model of the Interracial Committees of the South. Indeed, constant discussion of the native problem has set many people to thinking about their inherited beliefs. Perhaps it is not yet too late for a change of heart.

R. F. Alfred Hoernlé.

Book Notes

Works of special interest, important reprints, novels of more than average quality and other books which, though they cannot be reviewed at length, should be called to the attention of our readers, will be noticed descriptively in this new department. "Book Notes" will appear regularly in The New Republic.—The Editors.

Art

GREAT PICTURES OF EUROPE, by Thomas Munro. *New York: Brentano's. 289 pages, illustrated. $2.50.*

Thomas Munro, the author of several ambitious studies in esthetics, here turns to an humbler task, that of writing a general guide book to the great museums of Europe, intended primarily for those who are making their first grand tour through the world of art. There are one hundred reproductions, not very good mechanically, but chosen with discrimination; and each of these hundred pictures is discussed in detail by the author. The introduction is a brief primer of art appreciation.

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AN HOUR OF ART, by Walter Pach. *Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company. 158 pages. $1.*

Drawing on the riches of his experience and his reading, Mr. Pach, himself an artist, escorts the reader through an imaginary museum which contains all the exhibits required for his purpose. That purpose is "to consider art as a record of the human race," and in the limited time at his command he succeeds remarkably well in conveying a lively and sustained impression of the unity in variety of the artistic effort and achievement of man, from the earliest known cave paintings to the art of Matisse and Picasso.

ULTIMO, an Imaginative Narration of Life Under the Earth, with Projections by John Vassos and text by Ruth Vassos. *New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $5.*

A slight but pretentiously presented performance. The text, printed in Futura type in three-inch bands across the middle of quarto pages, is a stark, monotonous account of life on, and later within, this earth as it moves farther and farther from the sun. The illustrations are decorative inventions, like much modernistic stage-set and poster work.

Biography and Memoirs

MEMORIES AND VAGARIES, by Axel Munthe. *New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 257 pages. $3.*

A book that follows the celebrated Swedish doctor's best seller, "San Michele," "Memories and Vagaries" is a reprint of the English publication in 1898. Without being so complete and rich as Dr. Munthe's other book, it has, nevertheless, the same general quality, the same accounts and notebook memories and, doubtless, little inventions of the author's own fancy. Such chapter headings as "Italy in Paris," "Raffaella," "The Dogs in Capri," "When Tappio Was Lost," are enough to show how the mood of "San Michele" is carried on.

Travel and Adventure

HIGH TARTARY, by Owen Lattimore. *Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 370 pages, illustrated. $4.*

Mr. Lattimore proves the value of a well stored mind as equipment for a difficult expedition. His observations and judicious historical references clarify and enrich the story of his journey across the Central Asian mountains and deserts. His style, modeled somewhat on that of Doughty, falls sometimes into eccentricity, but never to the extent of making the passage unreadable. The book leaves its reader with an admiration for the author as a writer and a man, rather than as an adventurer.

LITTLE AMERICA, by Richard Evelyn Byrd. *New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 422 pages. $5.*

Richard E. Byrd, drawing in a large measure upon his journal, details the history of his recent expedition to the South Pole, from the inception of the plan in a conversation with Amundsen to the homeward embarkation on the "City of New York." His account is written in a straightforward, readable style, with only occasional evidence of stuffiness. The record of two years of endeavor in Little America is supplemented by photographs of penguins, a map, and an account of Dr. Lawrence Gould's geological investigations of the polar continent.

Poetry

THE CANTERBURY TALES OF GEOFFREY CHAUCER, with a version in modern English verse by William Van Wyck. *New York: Covici-Friede. Two vols. 530 pages. $50.*

"Graunte me," wrote Chaucer as he completed "The Canterbury Tales," "grace of verray penitence, confessioun and satisfaccioun to doon in this present lyf; thurgh the benigne grace of him that is king of kinges and preest over all preestes. . . ." "Here," add the publishers of this latest edition, "is ended the book of the Tales of Canterbury, written by Geoffrey Chaucer, translated into modern English by William Van Wyck, illustrated by Rockwell Kent, the book designed and printed by Samuel Aiwaz Jacobs at the Stratford Press, the illustrations reproduced by the Knudsen process, the paper furnished by Whitehead and Alliger. The edition consists of seventy-five copies on Crane's Olde Book, numbered 1 to 75; and nine hundred and twenty-four copies on Worthy Number Two Rag, numbered 76 to 999. Each copy is signed by the artist." To this account, one has merely to add that the modern English version, though pedestrian and marred by unskillful colloquialisms, is vigorous and easy to read. It is paralleled, for the benefit of more captious readers, by the original text, here printed in opposite columns.

Fiction

BEST SELLER, by N. O. Youmans. *Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.*

A lively novel in which a pseudonymous author muckrakes the book-publishing business in its more sordid aspects, describing the competition to acquire good authors and get rid of bad ones, the strong-arm methods by which books are foisted upon the retailers, the Dionysian amusements of salesmen when not engaged in calling on the trade and the heroism of the publisher who, if he must, will get drunk with a male author and make love to a female. "Mr. Youmans" on one page explains how a little good, dirty sex helps sell a book, and, on the next, obligingly gives us some of his own. But he should have put in more, or have written better.

DANCE NIGHT, by Dawn Powell. *New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.*

There seem to be in America as many professional observers of small-town life as there are small towns, or else this particular one, entitled Lamptown, Ohio, would never have been singled out for attention. It is a dirty and dreary little place, filled with unprepossessing people about whom the author has little to say; moreover, she has said it in a dull and undistinguished manner.

LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER, by D. H. Lawrence. CELESTINE: Being the Diary of a Chambermaid, by Octave Mirbeau. *Both published in New York by William Faro, Inc. $3 each.*

It was inevitable that the first of these two novels, after being pirated by every predatory publisher in the country, should finally have been butchered for the trade. This present edition, bled and emasculated into a commodity which will answer the twin requisites of censorship and pornography, is of little value to anyone except its unscrupulous publishers, who evidently hope that their mangled product will help them turn a none-too-honest penny. The other volume, "Célestine," is one of those French novels which, for a reason inexplicable to the newer generation, has gathered the lambent fires of pornography about it. Even smut-hounds will find it disappointing in the present translation.

Contributors

Robin and David Kinkead are identified in an editorial foreword preceding the first instalment of their letters in this issue.

T. S. Matthews, whose novel "To the Gallows I Must Go" is to be published by Knopf, is the literary editor of *Time*.

Louis Adamic is the author of "Dynamite," which the Viking Press is to publish soon. The book is a study of violence in the capital-labor conflict.

Murray Godwin was employed for several years by the Ford Motor Company in Detroit. He is now free-lancing in New York City.

Frederick Dupee is an editor of The Miscellany.

Robert Cantwell is a contributor to "The Third American Caravan." His first novel is to be published this spring by Farrar and Rinehart.

R. F. Alfred Hoernlé is head of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa. At present he is visiting professor at the University of Southern California.

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